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J. E. VAN LOHUIZEN-DE LEEUW

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THE  
"PĀLA-SENĀ" SCHOOLS  
OF SCULPTURE



LEIDEN  
E. J. BRILL

1984

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OF SCULPTURE

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SUSAN L. HUNTINGTON

Ohio State University

With 282 Figures on 119 Plates and 3 Maps



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*To John*



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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

The manuscript of this tenth volume in the series "Studies in South Asian Culture" was originally submitted by Dr Susan L. Huntington for the Ph.D. degree at the University of California where my late friend Professor LeRoy Davidson was her supervisor. After she had contacted Messrs. E. J. Brill with a view to have it published by them, I was asked by them to read the manuscript and immediately accepted it for this series in view of its obviously highly important contents. Messrs. E. J. Brill then requested her to reduce the original number of 379 illustrations by roughly one hundred items in order to keep the price of publication within reasonable limits. This time-consuming and laborious task, as well as the updating of the manuscript and the addition of the exhaustive Appendix have brought the volume to its present state. That it is now appearing in print with subventions from several sources is a matter of great satisfaction for all parties concerned.

It so happens, that this book is published exactly fifty years after R. D. Banerji's "Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture" saw the light. At the time, this study represented a major advance of our knowledge about the Pāla and Sena schools of art which flourished in Bihar and Bengal from the 8th-12th centuries. However, at his chronology was largely based on palaeography and neglected stylistic evidence, and as much new material has come to light in the meantime, a re-appraisal of the development of this highly important branch of Indian art is by now most timely indeed. By making good use of dated sculptures, stylistic details and known provenances, Dr Huntington has not only been able to reconstruct the stylistic and chronological development of the mediaeval art of Bihar and Bengal, but also to detect various regional schools hitherto unrecognized. It seems to me that this new investigation of Pāla and Sena sculpture will constitute a landmark in Indian art studies similar in importance to that of Banerji half a century ago.

University of Amsterdam, spring 1983

J. E. VAN LOHUIZEN-DE LEEUW

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76. Avalokiteśvara. Reign of Gopāla (III)? From Kiul, Monghyr District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. H: about 15 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Museum # T.1804. Ca. second quarter of 12th century. Photo: Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta.
77. Sadāśiva. 14th year of Gopāla (III). From Rajibpur, Dinajpur District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 104 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A25198 10998. Ca. second quarter of 12th century.
78. Pārvatī with Kārttikeya. 3rd year of Madanapāla. From Bihār Hill, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 58 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 1586. 1146-47 A.D.
79. Inscribed slab with figure of Pārvatī. Vikrama *Samvat* 1232 and 14th year of Govindapāla. At Viṣṇupāda temple compound, Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. 1175 A.D. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
80. Pūrṇeśvarī (or Puṇyeśvarī). 35th year of Palapāla. From Jaynagar, Monghyr District, Bihar. Black stone. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Museum # I.S. 71-1880. Ca. last quarter of 12th century. Photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
81. Manasā pillar. Reign of Vijayasena? From Pāikore, Birbhum District, Bengal.

- Black stone. Present whereabouts unknown. Ca. late 11th or first half of 12th century. Photo: *ASIAR*, 1921-22, pl. XXVIIIb.
82. Caṇḍī. 3rd year of reign of Lakṣmaṇasena or 3rd year of Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat*? From Rāmpāl, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: about 90 cm. Private Collection, U.S.A. Ca. 1181-82; or ca. 1111 or 1122-23.
  83. Slab with Buddha and two depictions of Vajravārāhī (or Marīci?). From Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Stone. H: about 75 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. 1021 A.D. (calculated from the Chinese). Photo: Janice L. Dundon.
  84. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Year 42 of an unspecified era. From Giryek, Patna District, Bihar. Stone. H: 53.5 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Ca. first quarter of 12th century.
  85. Tārā. Possibly dated Śaka 1308. From Udaypur Hill, Comilla District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 18 cm. Present whereabouts unknown. 1386 A.D.? Photo: N.N. Law, "Some Images," pl. IV, fig. XIIIa.
  86. Pārvaṭī. Śaka 1579. From Chāpāilā, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 76 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 71. 1657 A.D. Photo: Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi.
  87. Viṣṇu. From Masārḥ, Shahabad District, Bihar. Beige sandstone. H: about 275 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch 6482. Ca. 7th century.
  88. Sūrya. At Deo-Baruṇārḥ, Shahabad District, Bihar. Beige sandstone. H: 113 cm. Ca. 7th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
  89. Umā-Maheśvara. At Deo-Baruṇārḥ, Shahabad District, Bihar. Grey stone. H: 125 cm. Ca. 9th or early 10th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
  90. Umā-Maheśvara. At Deo-Baruṇārḥ, Shahabad District, Bihar. Grey stone. H: 80 cm. Ca. late 10th or early 11th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
  91. Viṣṇu images. At Deo-Markaṇḍeya, Shahabad District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. Ca. late 8th-early 9th century. Photo: Archaeological Survey of India.
  92. Varāha. At Āpsādh, Gaya District, Bihar. Pinkish sandstone. H: about 2 meters. Ca. late 7th century. Photo: Archeological Survey of India.
  93. Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardīnī. At Āpsādh, Gaya District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. H: about 165 cm. Ca. late 7th century.
  94. Sūrya. At Āpsādh, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 110 cm. as seen but extends into ground below. Ca. late 7th century.
  95. Viṣṇu. From Āpsādh, Gaya District, Bihar. Stone. H: over life size. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 4018. Ca. late 7th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
  96. Sūrya. At Siddheśvara Temple, Surajānka or Surjan Giri, Barābar Hills, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 75 cm. Ca. late 7th century.
  97. Viṣṇu. At Siddheśvara Temple, Surajānka or Surjan Giri, Barābar Hills, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 90 cm. Ca. 9th century.
  98. Varāha. At Siddheśvara Temple, Surajānka or Surjan Giri, Barābar Hills, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 150 cm. Ca. late 10th-early 11th century.
  99. Kalyāṇasundaramūṛti (Marriage of Śiva). From Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. H: 79 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch 6047. Ca. mid-to-late 9th century.
  100. Viṣṇu. From vicinity of Mahābodhi Temple, Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar.

- Grey-black stone. H: 76 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 5. Ca. late 8th or early 9th century.
101. Viṣṇu. From vicinity of Mahābodhi Temple, Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. H: 92 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 6. Ca. early 9th century.
  102. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. At Mahābodhi Temple, Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. H: 110 cm. Ca. mid-9th century.
  103. Buddha. From Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 140 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 114. Ca. late 9th century.
  104. Avalokiteśvara. Enshrined at Mahābodhi Temple, Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone, with paint recently added. H: about 100 cm. Ca. 10th century.
  105. Tārā. Enshrined at Mahābodhi Temple, Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone, with paint recently added. H: 127 cm. Ca. 10th century.
  106. Buddha. Central image in main shrine of Mahābodhi Temple, Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: over 3 meters. Ca. 10th century.
  107. Crowned Buddha. Enshrined at Mahābodhi Temple, Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 3 meters. Ca. 11th century.
  108. Diademed Buddha with Life Scenes. From Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone recently painted red. H: 226 cm. Mahant's Compound, Bodh Gayā. Ca. 11th century.
  109. Crowned Buddha. From Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 117 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 1. Ca. 11th century.
  110. Trailokavijaya. From Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. Mahant's Compound, Bodh Gayā. Ca. 10th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
  111. Bodhisattva (Mañjuśrī?) with his *prajñā*. From Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar. Grey stone. H: about 20 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # NS 4 A24269. Ca. 11th-12th century.
  112. Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 92 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # Kr. 4. Ca. 9th century.
  113. Tārā. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Grey stone. H: 84 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 5862. Ca. 9th century.
  114. Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 142 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24119 Kr. 13. Ca. 9th century.
  115. Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 76 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 5860. Ca. 10th century.
  116. Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. H: 97 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A25145 Kr. 5. Ca. 10th century.
  117. Buddha. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Enshrined at Devīsthān Mandir. Black stone. H: 84 cm. Ca. 10th century.
  118. Buddha. At Gunerī, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. Ca. 10th century. Photo: Archaeological Survey of India.
  119. Mañjuśrī Kumāra. From Gunerī, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 127 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 217. Ca. 10th century.



120. Maitreya. From Hasra Kol or Viṣṇupur, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 114 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 1682. Ca. 10th century.
121. Buddha. From Hasra Kol or Viṣṇupur, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 146 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 1681. Ca. 10th century.
122. Avalokiteśvara. From Hasra Kol or Viṣṇupur, Gaya District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 108 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 1680. Ca. 10th century.
123. Bodhisattva. From Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 200 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Ca. 7th century.
124. Mañjuśrī Kumāra. From Nālandā Site 3, Patna District, Bihar. (Excavation number S. 3/13,15,17,19/16.380.) Black stone. H: 74 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 10511. Ca. 7th century.
125. Vajraśārada. From Nālandā Site 3, Patna District, Bihar. Brown stone. H: 61 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00005. Ca. 7th century.
126. Sūrya. At Bargaon village, Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 81.5 cm. Ca. 7th century.
127. Avalokiteśvara. From Nālandā Site 14, Patna District, Bihar. Grey-black stone. H: 87 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00009. Ca. mid-9th century.
128. Birth of the Buddha. From Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 38 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24254. Ca. mid-9th century.
129. Buddha. At Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. *In situ* at Teliya Mandir. Black stone. H: over 2 meters as seen, but extends below ground. Ca. 10th century.
130. Buddha. From Nālandā Site 14, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 126.5 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00008. Ca. 10th century.
131. Life Scenes of Buddha. At Jagdiśpur, Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: over 3 meters. Ca. late 10th century. Photo: Janice L. Dundon.
132. Buddha (Maitreya?). From Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 6 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00067. Ca. 10th century.
133. Diademed Buddha. From Nālandā Site 3, Patna District, Bihar. Grey stone. H: 65 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 10515. Ca. mid-to-late 10th century.
134. Crowned Buddha and Life Scenes. At Bargaon village, Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 167.6 cm. Ca. 11th century.
135. Crowned Buddha? (head missing). From Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 120 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Ca. late 11th century.
136. Buddha. At Surājpur village, Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 142.2 cm. Ca. late 11th century.
137. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. From Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 125 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00007. Ca. late 11th century.
138. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. At Surājpur village, Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 137 cm. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.
139. Buddha. From Hassanpur, Rājgir, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 73.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 4568. Ca. 11th century.
140. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. From Ghosrāwān, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 275 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24123. Ca. 9th century.
141. Buddha. From Tetrāwān, Patna District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 99.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A25154 3746. Ca. 9th century.

142. Viṣṇu. From Dāpṭhū, Patna-Gaya border area, Bihar. Grey-black stone. Over life-size. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 4039. Ca. late 7th century.
143. Viṣṇu. At Dāpṭhū, Patna-Gaya border area, Bihar. Black stone. H: 81.4 cm. Ca. late 9th-early 10th century.
144. Śiva Naṭarāja. At Dāpṭhū, Patna-Gaya border area, Bihar. *In situ*. Black stone. H: about 90 cm. Ca. late 9th-10th century.
145. Umā-Maheśvara. From Kashtaharini Ghāt, Monghyr fort, Monghyr District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 79 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 6837. Ca. late 8th century.
146. Sūrya. From Lakhisarai, Monghyr District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 61 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 85. Ca. late 8th century.
147. Viṣṇu. From Singhrikee, Monghyr District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 54.5 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 10345. Ca. early 9th century.
148. Sūrya. From Monghyr District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 132 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 12. Ca. late 9th century.
149. Buddha. From Lakhisarai, Monghyr District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 147.2 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 22. Ca. 11th century.
150. Bhairava? From Abhāypur, Monghyr District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 42 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Ca. 12th century.
151. Crowned Buddha. From Antichak, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Limestone with traces of red and blue paint. H: 26.6 cm. Collection of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Patna University, Patna. Ca. 10th-11th century.
152. Crowned Buddha with Life Scenes. From Antichak, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 63.2 cm. Collection of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Patna University, Patna. Ca. 11th century.
153. Crowned Buddha with Life Scenes. From Antichak, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 125.7 cm. Collection of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Patna University, Patna. Ca. 11th century.
154. Buddha head. From Sultāngaṇj, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Black stone. Formerly in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Ca. 6th-7th century.
155. Simhanāda Avalokiteśvara. From Sultāngaṇj, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Black stone. H: about 180 cm. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham. Museum # 1472'85. Ca. late 11th-12th century.
156. Ratnasambhava. From Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 67.4 cm. Bangiya Sahitya Parisad, Calcutta. Ca. 11th century.
157. Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara with Saḍakṣarī Mahāvidyā and Saḍakṣarī Maṇidhara. From Colgong, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 143.3 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 95. Ca. late 11th-12th century.
158. Viṣṇu. From Eksari, Saran District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 102 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 10610. Ca. late 10th or 11th century.
159. Viṣṇu. From Silour, Saran District, Bihar. Black stone. H: 111 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # Arch. 6361. Ca. late 10th or 11th century.
160. Buddha. From Nālandā Site 1, Patna District, Bihar. (Excavation number S.1/944.) Metal. H: 23.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24281 9421. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.
161. Mañjuśrī Kumāra. From Nālandā Site 1, Patna District, Bihar. (Excavation

- number 27.2183 SI 982.) Metal. H. 20.2 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 11180. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.
162. Avalokiteśvara. From Nālandā Site 11, Patna District, Bihar. Metal. H: 21.6 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00169. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.
163. Buddha. From Nālandā Site 1, Patna District, Bihar. Metal H: 29.2 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 8346. Ca. late 7th-8th century.
164. Avalokiteśvara. From Nālandā Site 11, Patna District, Bihar. Metal. H: 15.2 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00146. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.
165. Avalokiteśvara. From Nālandā Site 1, Patna District, Bihar. Metal. H: 17.1 cm. Nālandā Museum, Nālandā. Museum # 00148. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.
166. Bodhisattva. From Nālandā Site 9, Patna District, Bihar. (Excavation number S.9/R.177.) Metal. H: 23 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24289 9447. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.
167. Buddha. From Nālandā Site 11, Patna District, Bihar. Metal with traces of gilding. H: 34.4 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 8459. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.
168. Buddha. From Nālandā Site 9, Patna District, Bihar. (Excavation number S.9/R.115.) Metal. H: 23.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24784 9440. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.
169. Cuṇḍā. From Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar. Metal. H: 30.5 cm. National Museum, New Delhi. Ca. late 9th century.
170. Trailokavijaya. From Nālandā Site 9, Patna District, Bihar. Metal. H: 25.4 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 8457. Ca. 10th century.
171. Mahāvairocana. From Nālandā Site 9, Patna District, Bihar. Metal with gilding. H: about 30 cm. National Museum, New Delhi. Ca. 11th century. Photo: National Museum, New Delhi.
172. Buddha. From Nālandā Site 4, Patna District, Bihar. (Excavation number S.4/R.79.) Metal. H: 18.4 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24292 9426. Ca. 11th century.
173. Buddha. From Nālandā Site 9, Patna District, Bihar. (Excavation number S.9/R.47.) Metal. H: 38 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24276 9436. Ca. 11th century.
174. Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 20.2 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9739. Ca. late 7th-8th century.
175. Buddha. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal, with gilding. H: 49 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9792. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.
176. Mañjuśrī Kumāra. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal, with inlay of copper and silver. H: 18 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9599. Ca. late 9th-early 10th century.
177. Buddha. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal, with silver inlay. H: 33 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9789. Ca. late 9th or early 10th century.
178. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 28 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9620. Ca. early-to-mid-10th century.
179. Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal, with copper and silver inlay. H: 19 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9608. Ca. mid-10th century.

180. Crowned Buddha. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 21.5 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9737. Ca. mid-10th century.
181. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 26 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9621. Ca. mid-10th century.
182. Tārā. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 29 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9736. Ca. mid-10th century.
183. Crowned Buddha. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal, with silver and copper inlay. H: 21.5 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9752. Ca. mid-10th century.
184. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal with silver inlay. H: about 40 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9619 and 9719. Ca. late 10th-early 11th century.
185. Crowned Buddha. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal with silver inlay. H: 66 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9793. Ca. 12th century.
186. Buddha. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal with silver inlay. H: 84 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9790. Ca. 12th century.
187. Avalokiteśvara. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal with gilding. H: 25.5 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9786. Ca. 12th century.
188. Tārā. From Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 6.2 cm. Patna Museum, Patna. Museum # 9666. Ca. 11th century.
189. Maitreya. From Fatehpur, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 6.6 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 91. Ca. 12th century.
190. Maitreya. From Fatehpur, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 21.8 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 92. Ca. 12th century.
191. Buddha. From Fatehpur, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal. H: 27.2 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 93. Ca. 12th century.
192. Viṣṇu. From Fatehpur, Gaya District, Bihar. Metal with silver inlay. H: 19 cm. Bodh Gayā Museum, Bodh Gayā. Museum # 88. Ca. 12th century.
193. Buddha. From Sultāngaṇj, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Metal. H: about 200 cm. City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham. Museum # 1116'85. Ca. 7th century.
194. Maitreya. From Antichak, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Metal. H: 9.5 cm. Private Collection, India. Ca. 12th century.
195. Samvara. From Pātharghātā, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Metal. H: 15.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24365. Ca. 11th century.
196. Vajratārā. Lotus *maṇḍala*. From Pātharghātā, Bhagalpur District, Bihar. Metal. H: about 15 cm. as shown. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 4551. Ca. 12th century.
197. Buddha. From Bhāsu-Bihār, Mahāsthāngaṇj, Bogra District, Bengal. Stone. Mahāsthān Site Museum, Mahāsthān. Ca. 7th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
198. Avalokiteśvara. From environs of Mahāsthāngaṇj, Bogra District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 132 cm. Mahāsthān Site Museum, Mahāsthān. Ca. 9th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
199. Yamunā. From Pāhārpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Stone. H: 81.4 cm. Karachi Museum, Karachi. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.

200. *Mithuna*. From Pāhārpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Stone. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century. Photo: *ASIAR*, 1925-26, pl. LIII.
201. *Vāyu?* From Pāhārpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Stone. Pāhārpur Site Museum, Pāhārpur. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
202. *Hevajra*. From Pāhārpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: about 7.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24305 12915. Ca. 12th century.
203. *Hari Hara*. From Burdwan District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 44.5 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 161. Ca. late 7th century.
204. *Viṣṇu* on *Garuḍa*. From Agradigun, West Dinajpur District, Bengal. Grey-black stone. H: 96.5 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Museum # T.153. Ca. late 8th-early-to-mid-9th century.
205. *Pārvaṭī*. From Bogra District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 81.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 4818. Ca. 10th century.
206. *Mahāpratisarā?* From Bhavanipur, Dacca District, Bengal. Brownish stone. H: 117 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 66.40. Ca. mid-10th century.
207. *Varāha*. From Silimpur, Bogra District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 109.2 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 1018. Ca. late 10th-early 11th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
208. *Ratnasambhava* or *Bhaiṣajyaguru?* From Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 73.5 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # A(a) 6 138. Ca. mid-11th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
209. *Amitābha* or *Garbhadhātu Vairocana?* From Mahākali, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 89 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 43. Ca. mid-11th century.
210. *Parṇaśabarī*. From Naynanda, Tangibari, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 112 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 67.319. Ca. 11th century.
211. *Sūrya*. Found near Rāmpāl, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 155 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Ca. first half of 11th century.
212. *Aghora*. From Ābdullāpur, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 104.2 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 34. Ca. early 11th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
213. *Mārīcī*. From Panditsar, Faridpur District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 122 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 46. Ca. early 11th century.
214. *Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardīnī*. From Backerganj District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 107 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Ca. early 11th century.
215. *Heruka*. From Subhapur, Comilla District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 165.2 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 47. Ca. early 11th century.
216. *Viṣṇu*. From Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 228.5 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Ca. early 11th century.
217. *Sūrya*. Probably from Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 117 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 66.39. Ca. first half of 11th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
218. *Sūrya*. From Daharpara, Faridpur District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 53.5 cm. Bangiya Sahitya Parisad, Calcutta. Museum # H(a)2/429. Ca. first half of 11th century.

219. *Viṣṇu*. From Arial, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 86.4 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 32. Ca. first half of 11th century.
220. *Kalyāṇasundaramūrti* (Marriage of Śiva). From Rāmpāl, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 50.8 cm. Bangiya Sahitya Parisad, Calcutta. Ca. first half of 11th century.
221. *Avalokiteśvara*. From Badarhati, Hooghly District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 46.4 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Ca. first half of 11th century.
222. *Parinirvāṇa*. From Khalisady, 24 Parganas District, Bengal. Black stone. H: about 38 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 172. Ca. first half of 11th century.
223. *Akṣobhya*. From Bareya, Nadia District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 70 cm. State Archaeological Museum of Bengal, Calcutta. Ca. mid-11th century.
224. *Male figure* (*Viṣṇu?*). From Jatardeul, 24 Parganas District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 67.4 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Ca. first half of 11th century.
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228. *Apītakucā?* From Kāgajipādā, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 145 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 69.171. Ca. 12th century.
229. *Viṣṇu*. From Mahākali, Munshigañj, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 125.7 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 69.170. Ca. 12th century.
230. *Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardīnī*. From Purulia (Manbhum) District, Bengal. Grey stone. H: 143.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24756 7588. Ca. late 11th-12th century.
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233. *Śyāma Tārā*. From Nimdighi, Niyamatpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 73.8 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 91. Ca. 11th-12th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
234. *Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara*. From Niyamatpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 76.2 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 1592. Ca. mid-to-late 11th or 12th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
235. *Sadāśiva*. From Jaminkari Tapar, Dinajpur District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 56 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 180. Ca. mid-to-late 11th or 12th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
236. *Brahmā*. From Jianagar, Bogra District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 74 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A25205 6492. Ca. mid-to-late 11th or 12th century.
237. *Avalokiteśvara*. From Tapandighi, West Dinajpur District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 105 cm. State Archaeological Museum of Bengal, Calcutta. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.
238. *Buddha*. From Dinajpur District, Bengal. Black stone. Varendra Research

- Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # A(a)2/266. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
239. Śiva. From Gaṇeśpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 109 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 1576. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.
240. Kārttikeya. From Mahātoṛe, Dinajpur District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 106.8 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 560. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.
241. Sūrya. From Chopra, Niyamatpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 188 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # F(a)1/242. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.
242. Sūrya. From Baria, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 81.4 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # F(a)9/222. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
243. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. From Chowrapara, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Black stone. H: 114.4 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A25200 9015. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.
244. Sūrya. From Gaur, Maldah District, Bengal. (Found in jungle near Gaṅgārāmpur.) Black stone. H: 99 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A25206 Gr. 20. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.
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252. Bodhisattva. From Maināmatī, Comilla District, Bengal. Metal. Maināmatī Site Museum, Maināmatī. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century. Photo: F. A. Khan, *Architecture and Art Treasures in Pakistan, Prehistoric, Protohistoric, Buddhist and Hindu Periods*. Karachi: Elite Publishers Ltd., 1969, p. 163.
253. Mañjuśrī Kumāra. From Śālban Vihāra, Maināmatī, Comilla District, Bengal. Metal. Maināmatī Site Museum, Maināmatī. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
254. Sitātapatrā. From Comilla District, Bengal. Metal. H: 52 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 1.B (iv)a. Ca. late 9th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
255. Avalokiteśvara. From Sylhet, Sylhet District, Bengal. Metal. H: 81.5 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 1124. Ca. 9th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.

256. Akṣobhya, Vairocana and Amitābha. From Jhewāri, Chittagong District, Bengal. Metal. H: 11.6 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24345 8173. Ca. mid-9th century.
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259. Buddha. From Jhewāri, Chittagong District, Bengal. Metal. H: 17 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24343 8151. Ca. mid-9th century.
260. Vasudhārā. From Jhewāri, Chittagong District, Bengal. Metal. H: 11.4 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24347 8179. Ca. mid-9th century.
261. Buddha. From Jhewāri, Chittagong District, Bengal. Metal. H: 15.6 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24315 8188. Ca. mid-to-late 9th century.
262. Buddha. From Jhewāri, Chittagong District, Bengal. Metal. H: 35.5 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24317 8142. Ca. 10th century.
263. Buddha. From Pāhārpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Metal. H: 8.2 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24298 12910. Ca. 9th century.
264. Umā-Maheśvara. From Pāhārpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Metal. H: 14.2 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24503 12907 P 673. Ca. 10th century.
265. Bodhisattva. From Mahāsthāngaṛh, Bogra District, Bengal. Gilt metal. H: 84 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
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267. Buddhist figure. From Mahāsthāngaṛh, Bogra District, Bengal. Metal. H: 12.8 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Ca. 9th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
268. Viṣṇu. From Mahāsthāngaṛh, Bogra District, Bengal. Metal. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Museum # I.S. 20-1955. Ca. 9th century. Photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
269. Viṣṇu. From Kumārpur, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Metal. H: 26 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 638. Ca. early 8th century. Photo: Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi.
270. Bodhisattva. From Mangalbari, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Metal. H: 6.4 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 487. Ca. 12th century.
271. Tārā. From Pandua, Maldah District, Bengal. Metal. H: 10 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 113. Ca. 12th century. Photo: Frederick M. Asher.
272. Manasā. From North Bengal. Metal with silver eyes and *ūrṇā*. H: 42 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24357 9212. Ca. late 11th century.
273. Kalyāṇasundaramūrti (Marriage of Śiva). From Mandoil, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Metal; silver inlay. H: 20.3 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 3036. Ca. third quarter 11th century. Photo: Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi.
274. Tārā. From Mandoil, Rajshahi District, Bengal. Metal; silver inlay. Varendra

- Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 3037. Ca. third quarter of 11th century. Photo: Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi.
275. Viṣṇu. From Sahibgañj, Rangpur District, Bengal. Metal, with silver eyes and *ūrṇā*. H: about 90 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24353 N.S. 2249. Ca. early 11th century.
276. Viṣṇu. From Sahibgañj, Rangpur District, Bengal. Metal. H: about 85 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A 24354 N.S. 2250. Ca. early 11th century.
277. Viṣṇu. From Sahibgañj, Rangpur District, Bengal. Metal. H: 31 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # A24358 N.S. 2251. Ca. 12th century.
278. Vāgīśvarī. From Sonarang, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Metal. H: 9.5 cm. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Museum # 110. Ca. 11th-12th century.
279. Buddha. From Dhamrai, Dacca District, Bengal. Metal. H: 24.1 cm. Dacca Museum, Dacca. Museum # 68.5. Ca. 11th-12th century.
280. Viṣṇu. From Sonarang, Vikramapura, Dacca District, Bengal. Silver. H: about 25 cm. Indian Museum, Calcutta. Museum # 12880 S. no. 154. Ca. 12th century.
281. Viṣṇu. From Sagardighi, Murshidabad District, Bengal. Metal. H: about 45 cm. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Ca. early 11th century.
282. Viṣṇu. From Sagardighi, Murshidabad District, Bengal. Metal. Bangiya Sahitya Parisad, Calcutta (?). Ca. 12th century. Photo: *EISMS*, pl. LXVIIIc.

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## FOREWORD

This book has as its limited purpose the delineation of the styles of the stone and metal sculptures which were created in Bihar and Bengal from the 8th-12th centuries. It is not an attempt to analyze or even enumerate the complex religious developments within this most interesting of periods. This is not because such a pursuit is not considered to be of value; indeed, a main goal of this work is to provide organization to the works of art from this period so that an important first step towards such religious and iconographic studies might be made. To some extent, even the analysis of styles remains somewhat limited in this work due to the constraints of space. Thus, the views presented here might, in some ways, seem to be an oversimplification of the problems of the art styles. For this, I apologize, and hope that the reader will view this work as I see it, as an initial study on a complex subject which will foster future studies into the ancient and rich cultures of Bihar and Bengal.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Every author must feel a great indebtedness to the individuals and institutions without whose help his book could not have come to fruition. My own debt spans three continents and more than a decade, from the time the study was first conceived as a doctoral dissertation to the publication of the final work. At each stage, numerous courtesies were extended to me and help was forthcoming from a variety of sources.

At museums in India, Bangladesh, Europe and the United States, I was permitted to photograph virtually every work of art of relevance to my study and was given access to museum records to aid in the documentation of such works. Although many individuals helped me, I wish to thank especially Parmeshwari Lal Gupta of the Patna Museum, Enamul Haque of the Dacca Museum, Mukhlisur Rahman of the Varendra Research Museum, A. K. Bhattacharyya of the Indian Museum, Calcutta and B. N. Sharma of the National Museum, New Delhi. While I know that I used much of their valuable time, these individuals never made me feel that my work was an interruption to them while I spent time at their museums. Later, they graciously responded to my numerous requests for further information and assistance through correspondence over the years. Other persons, including Shyamal Kanti Chakravarty of the Indian Museum, J. P. Saxena of the Bodh Gayā Museum, Naseem Akhtar of the Gayā Museum, and the authorities of the Nālandā Museum, Ashutosh Museum of Calcutta University, Bangiya Sahitya Parisad, State Archaeological Museum of Bengal, Ganesh Datta College and Karachi Museum also gave generously of their time and energy. The Archaeological Survey of India, the Department of Archaeology in Bangladesh, the Director of Archaeology in West Bengal and the Director of Museums and Archaeology in Bihar must also be acknowledged for their assistance. In particular, the Archaeological Survey of India granted me permission to work and photograph at every site and site museum in eastern India of importance to my subject and to use their vast photographic archives for my research. R. S. Sharma of the Department of Ancient Indian History at Patna University shared his knowledge of the eastern Indian materials with me and made available to me the collection from Antichak which was kept at Patna University. In England, Wladimir Zwalf of the British Museum, John Irwin and Richard Bartlett of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the authorities of the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery aided me in my work. In the United States, I am especially grateful to Terese Bartholomew for her help in working with the collection of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, the Avery Brundage Collection. Libraries throughout the world have provided source material for this study, and I am especially grateful to the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, the Archaeological Survey of India, the National Library, Calcutta, the Dacca Museum, the National Museum, New Delhi and the Bihar Research Society for permitting me to make extensive use of their library facilities.

In the early stages of the writing, J. LeRoy Davidson, my dissertation advisor, provided help in my efforts. J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, the editor of the series in which this book is published, has made many helpful and pertinent suggestions in the various stages of this work, from her first reading to the final publication. Dinesh Chandra Sircar deserves my



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The list of illustrations reveals the many persons and institutions who permitted me to publish objects in their collections or to use photographs made from their negatives. Frederick M. Asher is owed special thanks for generously allowing me to publish a number of photographs from his extensive collection, and for doing so graciously in spite of my repeated assurances to him that each request would be the last. He also photographed a number of objects in Bangladesh at my request to supply me with needed illustrations. Janice Dundon also contributed photographs to this volume. Nearly all of the photographs were printed by my husband, John, to whom my indebtedness is more fully expressed below.

In spite of all the work and time put into the collection of materials, research and preparation of this study, none of it would have come to fruition without the financial assistance I received from a number of sources. In my early work, a Chancellor's Grant from the University of California, Los Angeles and a Fulbright grant enabled me to begin my field research. Later, further trips to Asia were funded by The Graduate School, The College of the Arts and The Development Fund of The Ohio State University. The cost of production of this work was subvented by The Millard Meiss Publication Fund of The College Art Association of America, The Development Fund, The College of the Arts and The Graduate School of The Ohio State University. In particular, I would like to express my indebtedness to H. W. Janson, Albert Kuhn, Andrew Broekema and Jules La Pidus for their help and encouragement when I was seeking such aid.

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Above all, my husband, John, deserves my thanks. He accompanied me on many of my travels to sites in Bihar and Bengal and photographed most of the works used in this study. His skill as a photographer is evidenced by the quality of the photographs included in this volume. In the lengthy period of the writing and preparation of the manuscript, he gave great encouragement and relieved me from some of my other obligations to enable me to work. His knowledge in the field of Buddhism was invaluable to me in working with the Buddhist materials. He also drew the three maps included in this volume. For these reasons, and others, I dedicate this work to him with love and gratitude.

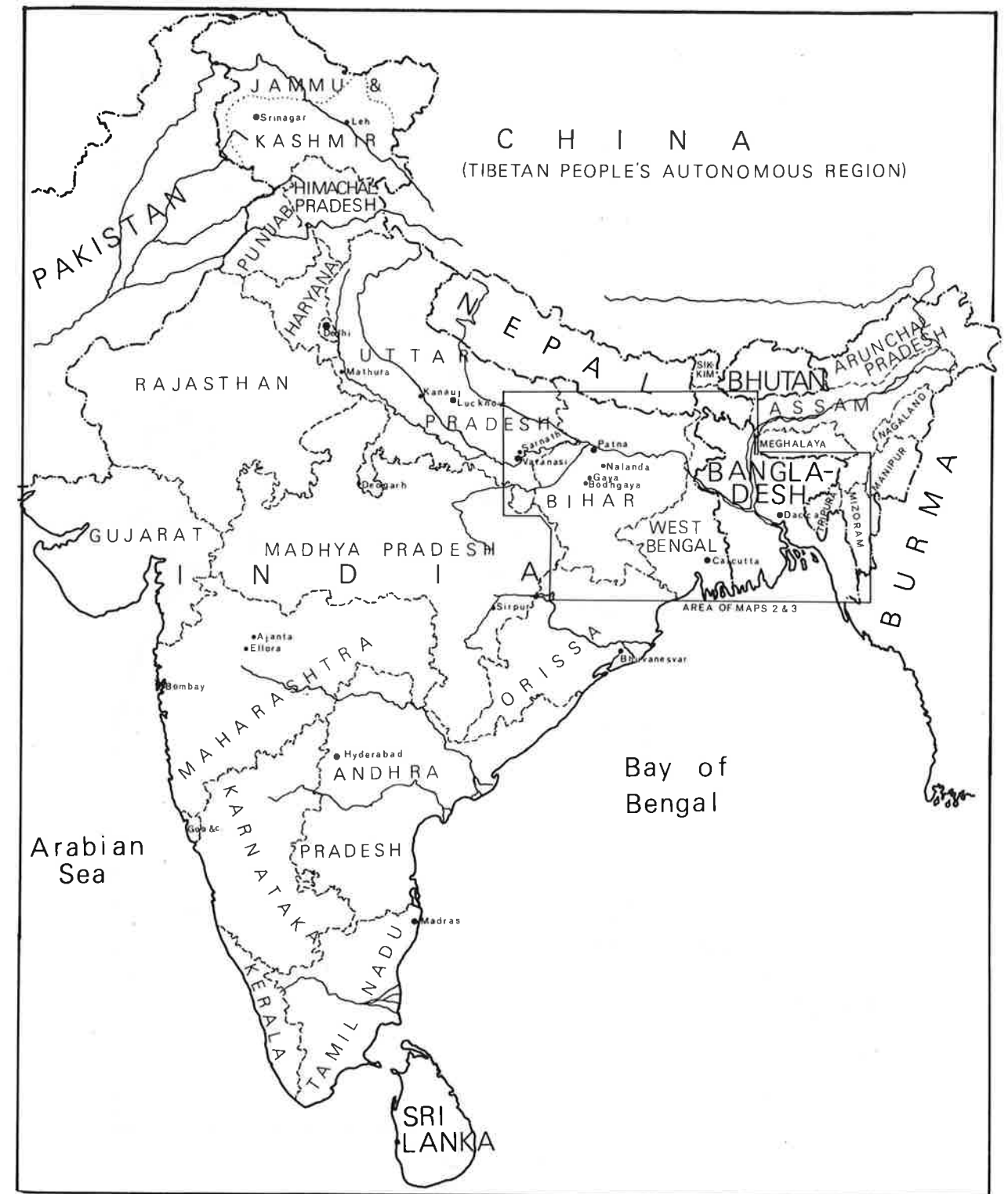
## ABBREVIATIONS

ABIA	<i>Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology</i> . Leyden: Kern Institute.
ABORI	<i>Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute</i> . Poona. [Also called <i>Annals of the Bhandarkar Institute</i> .]
ASB, Proc.	<i>Asiatic Society of Bengal, Proceedings</i> . Calcutta: 1865-1904.
ASIAR	<i>Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India</i> .
ASIR, BC	<i>Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Bengal Circle</i> . 1900-1901 through 1904-5.
ASIR, EC	<i>Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Eastern Circle</i> . 1905-6 through 1920-21.
ASR	Archaeological Survey of India. <i>Reports</i> . [“Cunningham” series.]
BBSMPG	<i>Bulletin of the Baroda State Museum and Picture Gallery</i> . Baroda.
BLK	<i>Bangladesh Lalit Kalā: Journal of the Dacca Museum</i> . Dacca.
BPWM	<i>Bulletin of the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India</i> . Bombay.
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i> . London.
EI	<i>Epigraphia Indica</i> . Delhi: Manager of Publications. [Archaeological Survey of India.]
EISMS	Banerji, Rakhal Das. <i>Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture</i> . Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, XLVII. Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1933.
GDCBS	<i>Ganesh Datta College Bulletin Series</i> . Begusarai [Bihar].
IAR	<i>Indian Archaeology: A Review</i> . New Delhi.
IHQ	<i>Indian Historical Quarterly</i> . Calcutta.
IMB	<i>Indian Museum Bulletin</i> . Calcutta.
Ind. Ant.	<i>Indian Antiquary</i> . Bombay.
Ind. Cult.	<i>Indian Culture</i> . Calcutta.
J. N. Banerjee Vol.	J. N. Banerjee <i>Volume: A Collection of Articles by his Friends and Pupils Presented on his Retirement from Carmichael Professorship of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta</i> . Calcutta: The Alumni Association, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta, 1960.
JAIH	<i>Journal of Ancient Indian History</i> . Calcutta.
JAS	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society</i> [Bengal]. 4th series. Calcutta, 1959- [Also see <i>JASB</i> , <i>JASL</i> , <i>JPASB</i> , <i>JRASBL</i> .]
JASB	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i> . 1st series. Calcutta, 1832-1904. [Also see <i>JAS</i> , <i>JASL</i> , <i>JPASB</i> , <i>JRASBL</i> .]
JASL	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society</i> [Bengal]. 3rd series, cont. Calcutta, 1951-1958.
JBORS	<i>Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society</i> . Patna. [After March-June 1943, XXIX, 1-2, title changed; also see <i>JBRS</i> .]
JBPP	<i>Journal of the Bihar Purāvid Parishad</i> . Patna.
JBRS	<i>Journal of the Bihar Research Society</i> . Patna. [Also see <i>JBORS</i> .]
JIH	<i>Journal of Indian History</i> . Trivandrum.
JISOA	<i>Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art</i> . Calcutta.
JNSI	<i>Journal of the Numismatic Society of India</i> . Bombay (through XVIII, 1 [1956]) and Varanasi (thereafter).
JOIB	<i>Journal of the Oriental Institute</i> . Baroda: M.S. University of Baroda.

- JPASB* *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. 2nd series. Calcutta, 1905-34. [Also see *JAS*, *JASB*, *JASL*, *JRASBL*.]
- JRAS* *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*. London.
- JRASBL* *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters*. 3rd series. Calcutta, 1935-50. [Also see *JAS*, *JASB*, *JASL*, *JPASB*.]
- JUPHS* *Journal of the Uttar Pradesh Historical Society*. Lucknow.
- JVRM* *Journal of the Varendra Research Museum*. Rajshahi: University of Rajshahi.
- MASB* *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Calcutta.
- MAI* *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*. Calcutta (through vol. 47) and New Delhi (thereafter).
- New Ind. Ant.* *New Indian Antiquary*. Bombay.
- OHRJ* *Orissa Historical Research Journal*. Bhubaneswar.
- Or. Art.* *Oriental Art*. London.
- PA* *Pakistan Archaeology*. Karachi: Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.
- PIHC* *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Congress*. [Year and place for each congress specified in bibliography entries.]

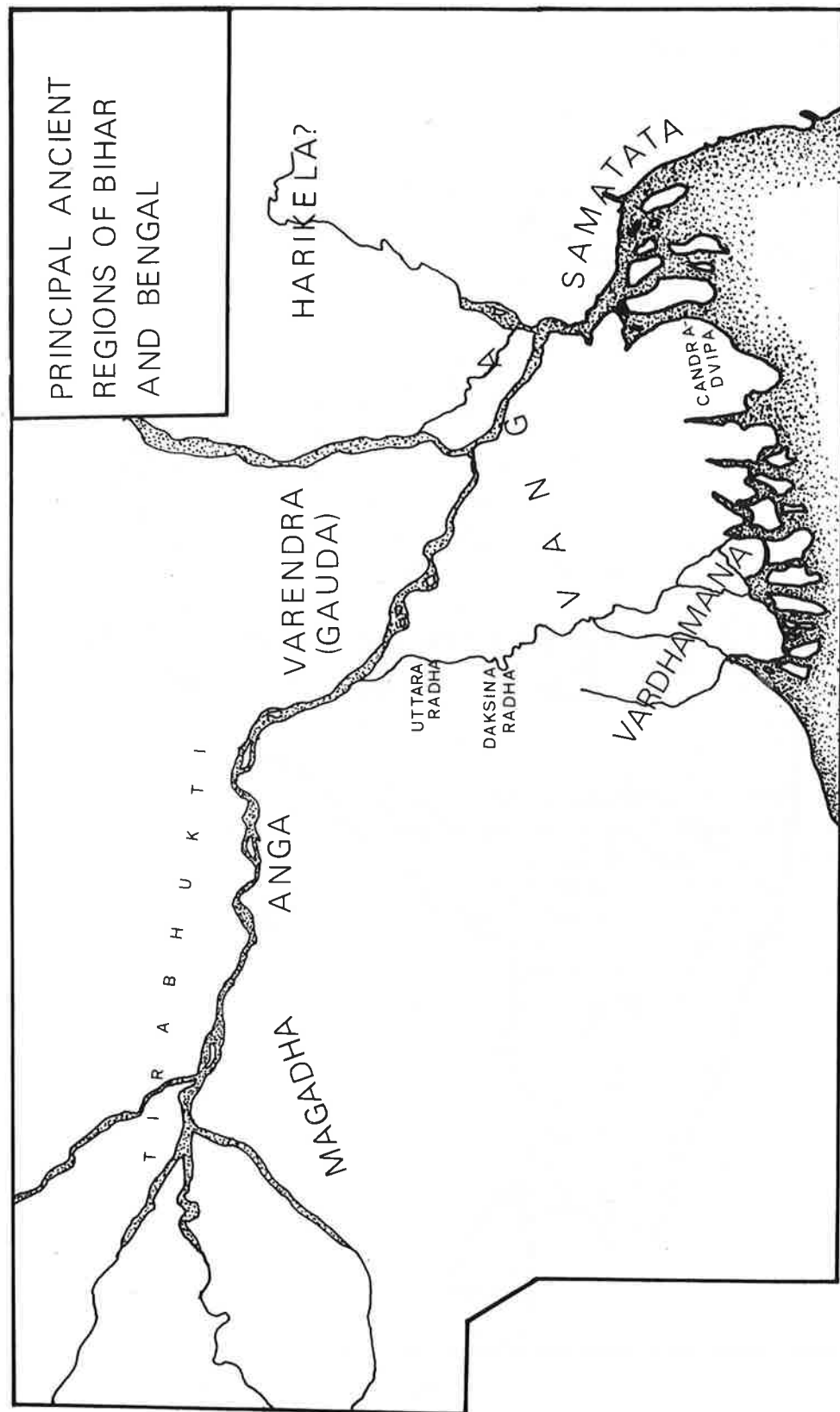
## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION OF SANSKRIT WORDS

In transliterating Sanskrit words, the system used, with a few exceptions, is that provided in Gösta Liebert (*Iconographic Dictionary of the Indian Religions*, ed. J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, *Studies in South Asian Culture*, vol. V [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976]). Diacritical marks have been employed for the names of sites, villages and other place names including ancient regions, but not for modern districts, regions, states, rivers and major cities. In many cases, I was unable to find an authoritative spelling, with diacritics, for the names of small villages or other art-yielding sites. When I did not know the proper spelling, I spelled the words phonetically and used no diacritics.



Map 1





Map 2

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

From the 8th-12th centuries, the regions of Bihar and Bengal were host to prolific production of religiously inspired sculptures. For much of this period, large portions of these regions were politically and culturally unified, although, today, Bihar is in India while Bengal is divided between India and Bangladesh. Most authors writing on Bihar and Bengal sculpture of approximately the 8th-12th centuries refer to the art as the “Pāla and Sena” schools. In a certain sense, this name is apt since during the period of concern, these regions were largely under the control of the Pāla kings, and subsequently, to a more limited extent, of the Senas. Indeed, the Pālas are frequently cited in literary works as great patrons of art, particularly Buddhist, and inscriptional evidence verifies their rather lavish patronage of Buddhist monastic establishments.<sup>1</sup> However, actual evidence of strong patronage by these rulers is lacking in surviving art works. In addition, recent analysis of the history of Bihar and Bengal during this period indicates that numerous less well-known dynasties, such as the Khadgas, Candras and Varmans, played a much more significant role in the politics of the time than had been believed previously. The rather complicated history of this period, as it is now known, is beyond the scope of the present work and will be discussed only as necessary. Thus, although in this volume, the term “Pāla-Sena period art” is often used generically to refer to the sculpture schools under consideration, it should be noted that neither a direct reference to Pāla or Sena patronage is necessarily implied, nor is the role of other families and dynasties in art production and history being denied.

The earliest literary reference to a school of art production in the region of Bihar and Bengal during the 8th through 12th centuries appears in the writings of Tāranātha, the 17th century Tibetan historian. He is credited with the statement that this school was founded during the reigns of the second and third Pāla emperors, Dharmapāla and Devapāla, by the father and son craftsmen, Dhīmān and Bīṭpalo, each of whom gave rise to a distinct subschool.<sup>2</sup> Supposedly, the followers of the father were known as the Eastern school (presumably Bengal) and those of the son, the Madhyadeśa school,<sup>3</sup> since they were most numerous in Magadha (south central Bihar).<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, while thousands of works of art have survived from this period, none of these is inscribed with either the name of Dhīmān, the father, or Bīṭpalo, the son. Archaeology has, therefore, not yet verified this

<sup>1</sup> For an investigation into the question of the Pālas as patrons of Buddhism, see Susan Locher Buchanan, “A Study of Pāla Patronage” (M.A. thesis, The Ohio State University, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya, trans., *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India* (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 1970), p. 348.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> In most ancient Indian texts, the term Madhyadeśa refers to central north India, not Bihar. However, Tāranātha apparently held the traditional Buddhist view that Madhyadeśa included the Magadha region of Bihar. See Binayendra Nath Chaudhury, *Buddhist Centres in Ancient India* (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1969), pp. 1-11, for Buddhist geography. For problems relating to modern geographic names in Bihar, see chapter 4, n. 1 in this volume.

portion of Tāranātha's statement, but it cannot be denied that very active production of both stone and metal sculpture occurred in the region and time period which he specifies, as attested to by the numerous remaining specimens.

The sculptures included in this study have been limited primarily to figurative stone stelae and metal images. Other types of objects, such as sculpted *lingas* and votive *stūpas*, have been excluded because, for the most part, the style and development of the sculpture which comprises the main focus of this study is generally more easily seen in figurative icons (or images where the scale of the figures is large in proportion to the overall work). It should be noted, however, that votive *stūpas* especially constitute an important sector of the art works produced in Bihar and Bengal during this period and are an important subject for future study. In general, iconographic discussions are absent from this volume, since this complex subject is best left for specialized studies. This exclusion does not imply a lack of importance; on the contrary, the reader should understand that the emphasis on style and chronology in the present work is seen only as a first step, in which an ordering of the Pāla-Sena period materials is attempted, so that the way is paved for future studies into religious history, iconography and the like.

The typical stone sculpture from Bihar or Bengal is made of greyish or black stone. The grey stone is believed to originate in the Gaya region of Bihar and the blacker, more dense stone is found primarily in eastern Bihar (the Rājmaḥāl Hills) and Bengal. Presumably, carved and uncarved slabs of stone from these quarries and others were easily transported along the rivers of this region. Possibly, the more closely grained stone of Bengal enabled the artists to achieve greater refinement of detail in their works, accounting for some of the complexity associated with the Bengal images in general. Most of the stone carvings from Bihar and Bengal are in a stele format. They were invariably made as separate images to be set into shrines or niches (presumably in brick temples which are, for the most part, now lost), and thus, they contrast to the architectural sculptures of other contemporaneous art schools in India, such as that of the Candellas of Bundelkhaṇḍ (central India), where so many of the images were part of the actual fabric of the temple. The Bihar and Bengal stone sculptures range from miniatures only a few centimeters high (Fig. 132) to large representations of figures much over life-size (Fig. 129).

Metal images from these regions also may have a stele-like format in that, often, the central figure is shown surrounded by a *prabhāmaṇḍala* (Fig. 164), or has a throne (Fig. 165) which serves as a kind of back-slab. As in the case of stone carvings, metal images range in size from miniatures only a few centimeters in height (Fig. 188) to monumental, over life-sized works (Fig. 193). The metal alloys used in Bihar and Bengal provide the images with a rather red or coppery color in general, although there are observable differences from site to site. Images from Nālandā, for example, are generally reddish while those from Kurkihār are more yellow.<sup>5</sup> Usually, the metal images are hollow cast, except for the smaller works which are often solid. Most of the metal pieces have been found in hoards, or through archaeological excavation; for the most part, their original contexts can only be surmised.

<sup>5</sup> This visual observation is borne out by chemical analysis. For a study of the Nālandā images, see B. B. Lal, "An Examination of Some Metal Images from Nālandā," *Ancient India* XII (1956):53-57. For the Kurkihār finds see K. P. Jayaswal, "Metal Images of Kurkihār Monastery," *JISOA* II (1934):71. Also see Bhagwant Sahai, "The Metallic Composition of the Bronzes from Bihar," *JBPP* I (1977):231-40.

Considering the great quantities of metal and stone sculptures which have survived from this period, very little has been done by scholars to define the various subschools, to set up a definitive chronology, or to describe the stylistic sequences of this school. The stone sculptures were first noted in modern times by Broadley, Beglar, Kittoe and Cunningham in the 19th century.<sup>6</sup> For the most part, these explorers did not attempt to define the school of sculpture which developed throughout these regions. Rather, their reports are invariably accounts of the ruins at sites which they visited and the antiques they noticed or recovered. Since these writings do not, properly speaking, deal with the artistic school as a whole, these men cannot be considered early authors on the subject of this study. Many of the works which were discovered by them became part of the collections now found in museums in India. Most notably, the Broadley collection is presently divided between the Indian Museum, Calcutta and the Patna Museum, Patna. Broadley collected these sculptures mainly from the Patna District of Bihar while he was a British official in that region during the late 19th century. Originally, he kept these sculptures in a small museum at Bihār Sharīf. When the sculptures were later brought to the Indian and Patna Museums, they were entered into the respective museum registries with provenance listed simply as "Broadley Collection, Bihar." Since the name "Bihar" refers both to the town of Bihār Sharīf, the supposed site of the ancient Buddhist monastery of Uddanḍapura, as well as the entire state of Bihar which hosted major artistic developments of this period, this ambiguous term causes considerable consternation among scholars trying to study the origins and developments of Pāla-Sena period sculpture. However, a document recently brought to light by Frederick M. Asher helps to assign provenance to many of the Broadley pieces.<sup>7</sup> It is basically a photograph album consisting of group portraits of the many sculptures Broadley had collected as they were arranged in the courtyard of the museum at Bihār Sharīf. By associating the title information given under each photograph with each sculpture in the picture, it is possible to determine the provenance of a number of pieces. However, many of the images are too small in the photographs to be read clearly. Others were undoubtedly not included in the photographs and, of course, any which were not yet in the collection would have been missing. However, much valuable information concerning the documentation of this important collection of sculptures has been obtained from this album, and even those sculptures which are not explained by this document may be used to demonstrate the general styles found in the Patna District of Bihar.<sup>8</sup>

The first real discussion of Pāla-Sena period sculptures is to be found in the *Catalogue and Handbook of the Archaeological Collections in the Indian Museum* (1882-3) by John Anderson<sup>9</sup> and subsequently by Theodor Bloch in his *Supplementary Catalogue of the Archaeological Collec-*

<sup>6</sup> The references for these authors are too numerous to be mentioned here; instead, they are given in the bibliography.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Parmeshwari Lal Gupta, former Director of the Patna Museum, mentioned to me that these records had been found by Frederick M. Asher. Following this up, I was able to locate the photograph album at the National Library, Calcutta, and to obtain a microfilm copy of it. The album has since been published by Asher in "The Former Broadley Collection, Bihar Sharif," *Artibus Asiae* XXXII, 2-3 (1970):105-24.

<sup>8</sup> It must also be noted that Broadley sometimes confused images or reported their provenance incorrectly, as in Alexander Meyrick Broadley, "The Buddhistic Remains of Bihār," *JASB* XLI, 3 (1872):209-312; *ASB*, *Proc.*, 1872, pp. 119-20. See the Appendix to this volume for notation of some of these errors. Thus, Broadley's album must be used with some caution.

<sup>9</sup> John Anderson, *Catalogue and Handbook of the Archaeological Collections of the Indian Museum*, 2 vols. (Calcutta: Trustees of the Indian Museum, 1882-83).

tions of the Indian Museum (1911).<sup>10</sup> The Patna Museum examples were not published, for the most part, until 1965 in the *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities* although a manuscript of the text had been completed in the 1930s.<sup>11</sup> By virtue of their being largely descriptive catalogues, these volumes do not discuss the sculptures in an analytical, art historical manner, nor do they synthesize information about the schools of art.

In Bengal, where the easternmost sites yielding Pāla-Sena period materials are located, the sculptures of this school were not published as a group until 1919 in the *Catalogue of the Archaeological Relics in the Museum of the Varendra Research Society*<sup>12</sup> and then in 1929 by N.K. Bhattasali in the *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*.<sup>13</sup> While the Varendra Research Society publication is simply a descriptive catalogue, Bhattasali attempts to notice the religious developments which occurred in Bengal during the 8th-12th centuries, but does not deal with style or chronology in his work. More important, these volumes deal entirely with those sculptures which have been found in Bengal alone and neglect the relationships with the contemporaneous or slightly earlier schools of Bihar.

The only major works attempting to deal with these sculptures as a continuous development and relate them to South Asian history, and particularly to the reigns of the Pāla and Sena kings, were published between 1928 and 1933. In 1928, J.C. French published his book, *The Art of the Pāl Empire of Bengal*,<sup>14</sup> in which he gives the lineage of the major Pāla kings as it was known to him, describes the general characteristics of the school and cites several examples of sculpture bearing dated inscriptions in the eras of various Pāla kings. However, so few examples are given in this book and so much new material has come to light in recent years, that this work is of little use to the art historian of today. Almost at the same time, Stella Kramrisch published a lengthy article in *Rūpam* on "Pala and Sena Sculpture."<sup>15</sup> While she succeeds in assembling a good variety of sculptures, she does not establish a chronological basis upon which to date Pāla and Sena period images other than their growing complexity as time progresses. This observation can, in fact, be verified by association of images with dated examples, as will be done in this study.

In 1933, R. D. Banerji published his *Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture*,<sup>16</sup> the most recent major work attempting to deal with the problems of the period under discussion in any detail. His arguments for chronology are based on paleography. When a date is not given in an inscription, he dates inscribed sculptures according to the developments of paleography as he has defined them. For the most part, his discussions center around the development of the palatal letter *śa* which he feels paces the developments of the script quite accurately. However, since other letter forms are not taken into consideration and he

<sup>10</sup> Theodor Bloch, *Supplementary Catalogue of the Archaeological Collections of the Indian Museum* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1911).

<sup>11</sup> Parmeshwari Lal Gupta, ed., *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities* (Patna: Patna Museum, 1965).

<sup>12</sup> Radhagovinda Basak and Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya, *A Catalogue of the Archaeological Relics in the Museum of the Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi* (Rajshahi: Varendra Research Society, 1919).

<sup>13</sup> Nalini Kanta Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum* (Dacca: Dacca Museum Committee, 1929).

<sup>14</sup> J. C. French, *The Art of the Pāl Empire of Bengal* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1928).

<sup>15</sup> Stella Kramrisch, "Pala and Sena Sculpture," *Rūpam* XL (Oct. 1929):107-26.

<sup>16</sup> Rakhal Das Banerji [also spelled Banerjee], *Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, XLVII (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1933) (hereafter cited as *EISMS*).

does not corroborate this inscriptional data with stylistic developments of the sculpture, his study is incomplete, and sometimes inaccurate. After establishing his chronology, Banerji groups the works according to iconography and subject matter and discusses them from that point of view. Although the provenance of many of the pieces was available from museum records, Banerji does not attach any importance to the find-spot of his examples in terms of style, date or subject matter. In addition to these factors, Banerji bases most of his judgements on the examples housed in the Indian Museum and fails to include enough specimens in other collections or locations to make his study truly comprehensive.

Thus, to the present, no work has satisfactorily dealt with the problems of Bihar and Bengal sculpture styles of the 8th-12th centuries in their entirety. The catalogues mentioned above, by definition, exclude material not in the collections of the various museums and each of the other studies fails in some way to coordinate the material so that chronology, style and regional developments are treated fully. In addition to the inadequacies of the early studies, so much material has been unearthed since the 1930s that our knowledge of this subject has greatly increased and needs to be incorporated into any definitive work. Most notably, the archaeological excavations at important sites, such as Nālandā and Pāhārpur, have never been published in an analytical study although they are treated in archaeological reports and have been mentioned in various articles. The metal images found at Nālandā especially as well as several other hoards of metal images produced during the Pāla and Sena periods have not been integrated into the whole development of sculpture of this period. Most impressive among the hoards known for some time are those from Jhewāri and Kurkihār. Recently, very significant discoveries have been made and these need to be studied in light of the total developments. These include, for example, the bronze hoards found at Fatehpur in the Gaya District of Bihar, the images from the large monastic establishment at Antichak in Bhagalpur District, Bihar, which is believed to be the ancient monastery of Vikramaśīla, and those from Maināmatī, Comilla District, Bengal. Much material also remains unnoticed in the many villages where the images are still in active worship today.

This study attempts to re-evaluate the early ideas concerning the origin and development of sculpture in Bihar and Bengal at the time of Pāla and Sena rule, ca. 750-1200 A.D., in light of new evidence. During the course of collecting the material for this work, it became apparent that the "schools" could not simply be thought of as a direct line of development based strictly on chronology. More important in some cases than its date, the provenance of a given sculpture accounted for its style and other distinguishing features. There can be no question that major sites such as Bodh Gayā, Nālandā and Kurkihār maintained fairly large groups of artisans at all times during this period of activity and had little need to import artists or craftsmen from other places. Thus, while the sculpture produced at individual sites certainly bears similarity to other sculpture of the period from different locales, distinct schools of craftsmanship may be discerned and a history of the developments at separate locations may be propounded. Minor sites (that is, those bearing remains but no evidence of either a long or particularly active development) are often derivative of the styles found at influential centers of religious and artistic activity. Hence, sculptures from numerous sites in the Gaya District show remarkable resemblance to carvings from Bodh Gayā and Kurkihār and together form a distinct subschool of Pāla art which sets them apart from other regional schools, such as that of Nālandā and environs, for example. Thus, while the first part of this study deals with the chronology of the

general development of Pāla and Sena period sculpture, this chronology will be used as a grid against which the regional developments may be seen to have taken place.

When the ancient political divisions of the region have importance to the distinctiveness of the artistic schools, these divisions will be maintained. However, as in the case of Magadha (south central Bihar), when the regional developments of art had little to do with political divisions but rather concentrated around important religious centers, the material will be discussed accordingly. A general chronological sequence will be followed in this work in that the earlier sites will be considered first, as much as possible.

In using a geographical methodology in addition to the necessary chronological means, it becomes evident that as the period progresses, there is a definite eastern and southern movement of the artistic centers from Bihar into Bengal. While the majority of images of the Pāla period dating from the 8th-9th centuries are found in Magadha, mainly at Buddhist establishments, most of the later examples of the 11th and 12th centuries have been recovered in eastern Bihar and in Bengal. Thus, the more simplified sculptures characteristic of the earlier period are commonly found in Magadha and the more complicated, elaborated stelae of the later phase predominate in the regions of Bengal. In addition to this geographical shift, which accompanies the tendencies towards greater elaboration of form, the developments of the Bihar and Bengal schools of sculpture document the gradual supplanting of one religion by another. It will be seen that while the majority of early Bihar and Bengal sculptures are Buddhist in subject, the later sculptures are primarily Brahmanical, and mainly Vaiṣṇava. However, it must be borne in mind that Brahmanical sculptures existed throughout the predominantly Buddhist period, even at Buddhist sites, and that Buddhist images are found as late as the 12th century in Bengal. In relation to the question of Buddhist versus Brahmanical images, it should be mentioned that a common misconception about the art of the Pāla and Sena periods is that syncretic forms were extremely numerous during this period and that the Buddhist and Brahmanical religions were nearly inseparable in many ways. I have found that, proportionate to the great numbers of Pāla-Sena period sculptures which have been recovered, however, very few may be definitely termed syncretic rather than simply reflective of collateral developments. Also, with regard to iconography, it may be noted that a particular deity was often found in profusion at a given site, indicating that the popularity of a personification gave rise to regional or local emphasis in iconography.

The basis of the judgements and conclusions made in this survey, besides published references to the material, is a personal study collection of approximately five thousand photographs of Bihar and Bengal sculptures taken in museums and at sites having this material. I believe that this number constitutes approximately eighty to ninety percent of the above ground Bihar material and about sixty to seventy percent of the Bengal material.<sup>17</sup> These numbers primarily include examples which may be considered accurate documents because they bear dated inscriptions or, more usually, because their provenance is known. The documented examples include specimens still located at the villages or sites where they were unearthed, or at site museums which have been established to house them, as well as the material found in private or public collections in India

<sup>17</sup> A virtually comprehensive publication of photographs of the Bihar and Bengal sculptural materials is forthcoming in a microfiche archive edited by Susan L. Huntington, to be published by Inter Documentation Company, Zug, Switzerland. I am extremely grateful to Frederick M. Asher for allowing me full access to his personal archive of photographs of Bihar and Bengal materials to supplement my own.

and Bangladesh which have known provenance and/or important inscriptions. The provenance of the sculptures has been taken in many cases directly from the museum registries and archaeological excavation reports, except for the Broadley collection, which has been correlated to the photographs as described in the article by Frederick Asher,<sup>18</sup> and to Broadley's published accounts of his work.<sup>19</sup> Since, for the most part, the material presently in European and American collections is not documented, these objects have not been used as control pieces, but in the future may serve as cases to verify the definitions of periods and schools attempted here. My conclusions are frequently drawn on the evidence of pure numbers; that is, the geographical definitions and the assessment of the development of site and regional styles have been arrived at largely by noting that a great number of images from a given site or area bear unmistakable resemblances to each other. However, much material of this period and region is yet unexcavated, even at sites such as Nālandā, which have yielded much information, as well as at sites like Kurkihār, which have been hardly touched. In addition, there are undoubtedly many places which are still unnoticed, yet promise to yield new documents of these schools, and it should be remembered that these discoveries are bound to add to and change many of the conclusions of the present study.

In addition to the intrinsic interest of the Bihar and Bengal developments, these traditions have great importance for the understanding of numerous art schools outside of India and Bangladesh. The artistic developments of the Pāla and Sena schools unfortunately reached a terminus on Indian soil. By the 13th century, Muslim domination in the area had virtually called a halt to Buddhist religious practices in this region and perhaps upset the economic base which had allowed the patronization of Brahmanical art. However, the influences which these artistic traditions had abroad, primarily in the Buddhist countries of T'ang and Sung China and especially Yunnan, Java, Sumatra, Burma, Nepal and Tibet, kept the traditions viable to some extent. In Buddhist terms, the Pāla-Sena period is one of intense international activity, with scholars and monks from India travelling abroad and with great numbers of devotees from other Buddhist countries coming to India for pilgrimage or for study. In a sense, the broad characteristics of the Pāla-Sena style of art had such bearing on the developments of Buddhist art in other regions that it might well be termed an international style. While it is beyond the scope of this study to deal with the influences of the Buddhist art of Bihar and Bengal abroad, mention of this phenomenon is made whenever applicable in the text.

Besides the visual likeness between the art of the Pāla-Sena periods and the art of contemporaneous Buddhist countries, this contact is also seen in iconographic developments. For example, tantric forms encountered in Tibet and Nepal are frequently found in Indic prototypes of this period. These include *yuganaddha* images (Fig. 202), Mahāvairocana (Fig. 171), female divinities (Fig. 169), Trailokavijaya (Fig. 170), the Jina Buddhas (Fig. 223), and others. These Indianizing influences took place in a most simple manner. In India itself, travel was common enough, with Buddhist devotees especially journeying along the already well-defined pilgrimage routes. In the same way, visitors from other countries came overland or by sea to India. Foreign monarchs were even known to erect Buddhist establishments of great costliness at Indian institutions such as the Śailendra

<sup>18</sup> Asher, "Former Broadley Collection."

<sup>19</sup> Broadley, "Buddhistic Remains."

king of Suvarṇadvīpa (Java and Sumatra), who endowed a monastery at Nālandā during the reign of the third Pāla emperor, Devapāla, in the early 9th century.<sup>20</sup> A verse from the chronicle of the *Rāmacaritam*, an epic written about the Pāla emperor Rāmapāla, describes Dharmapāla, the second emperor in this line, as the “light of his (Samudra’s) race, whose fleet of stone-boats appeared splendid, when it crossed the sea (floating) like bitter gourds, (and) whose pure fame also became resplendent after having crossed the sea,”<sup>21</sup> thus referring to his seafaring abilities as well as the Pāla renown abroad.

Indian objects were not only transported within India, but small ones especially were carried back with devotees returning to their homelands. Atīśa apparently carried with him to Tibet sixty loads of goods on thirty horses,<sup>22</sup> which undoubtedly contained illustrated manuscripts, small stone and metal sculptures and the like. Other documents of early transport of such items include a small stone carving of Samvara presently in Dharmasāla which was recently brought out of Tibet where it is believed to have been taken in the 12th-13th century, a metal lotus *maṇḍala* of the Buddha of Indian origin but recently brought out of Peking, and an Indian metal sculpture with Tibetan inscriptions presently in Śrīnagar.<sup>23</sup> Published examples of such transport have appeared in a number of articles and books.<sup>24</sup> The conscious looking to India as the homeland of Buddhism is reflected in the artistic developments of these countries. In some cases, the art is almost indistinguishable from that created on Indian soil, such as the case of many Javanese bronzes and some from Southern Tibet. An understanding and documentation of the developments which took place in Bihar and Bengal during this period is, therefore, important to the history of Buddhist art in much of the rest of Asia.

<sup>20</sup> The Nālandā copper-plate, dated the year 39 (Devapāla), records the grant of Bālaputradeva, ruler of Suvarṇadvīpa, of five villages for the maintenance of a monastery at Nālandā. See Hirananda Sastri [also spelled Shastri], “The Nalanda Copper-Plate of Devapaladeva,” *EI* XVII (1923-24):310-27; also, Radha Krishna Chaudhary [also spelled Radhakrishna and Choudhary], *Select Inscriptions of Bihar* (Patna: Shanti Devi, 1958), p. 11. See also p. 109 below.

<sup>21</sup> Haraprasad Sastri, ed., *Rāmacaritam of Sandhyākaranandin*, MASB, III, 1 (Calcutta, 1910; revised with English translation and notes by Radhagovinda Basak, Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1969), p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Sarat Chandra Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow* (Calcutta, 1893; reprint ed., Calcutta, 1965), p. 70.

<sup>23</sup> The Samvara is at the so-called Glamour House monastery in Dharmasāla; the lotus *maṇḍala* belongs to a private collector in London; and the image in Śrīnagar is the one published by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy in his *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (London: Edward Goldston, 1927; reprint ed., New York: Dover, 1965), pl. LXXII, fig. 232, which he mistakenly suggests is Kashmiri in origin.

<sup>24</sup> For example, see Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1949), I:172, figs. 1-2; I:206, figs. 85-86, etc.

## CHAPTER TWO

# ORIGINS AND PRECEDENTS

Compared to the prolific production of both stone and metal sculptures in eastern India from the 8th-12th centuries, a paucity of examples exists from the pre-Pāla periods. However, sufficient examples remain in both stone and terracotta, as well as some in metal and stucco, to enable us to trace the origins of the schools of sculpture which flourished under the dynasties of eastern India, especially the Pāla and later the Sena kings. Unfortunately, not a single uncontroversibly datable sculpture survives from the 6th through the late 7th or early 8th centuries, the period just preceding the emergence of the art schools under consideration in this volume.<sup>1</sup> However, it is not unexpected that some such documents will surface one day. There is evidence, for example, that dated pieces were made during this time period, such as the now-lost image of Sūrya from Shāhpur, presumably dated in the Harṣa era, but apparently made during the reign of Ādityasena, a king of the Later Guptas of Magadha.<sup>2</sup> Given the renown of eastern Indian kings of this period, including Harṣa, Śaśāṅka and others, our meagre knowledge of the art is surprising.

In this discussion, isolated remains will be treated as well as whole complexes of pre-Pāla sculptures which have survived and which have relevance to the later developments in Bihar and Bengal. It may be noted that most of the examples are from Bihar, not Bengal. While specimens from Bengal do exist, in fact, the majority of pre-Pāla pieces have been found in Bihar. This relates to what I shall later describe as the concentration of art production in Bihar during the early Pāla period. By no means will all the known pre-Pāla sculptures be mentioned in this chapter.<sup>3</sup> Many pieces which have been found at sites

<sup>1</sup> In spite of this handicap, an admirable job of reconstructing the history and developments of this period has been done by Frederick M. Asher in *The Art of Eastern India, 300-800 A.D.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> The piece was first noticed by Alexander Cunningham (*Report of a Tour in Bihar and Bengal in 1879-80 from Patna to Sunargaon*, ASR, XV [Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1882; reprint ed., Delhi and Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1969], pp. 11-12), who found it in the village of Shāhpur, near Bihār Sharif. Its date has been variously read. See the Appendix, no. 3; also, Cunningham, ASR, XV, p. 12; John Faithfull Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors*, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, III (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1888; reprint ed., Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1963), pp. 208-10; and Dinesh Chandra Sircar [also spelled Sarkar], *Indian Epigraphical Glossary* (Delhi, 1966), pp. 10-11.

<sup>3</sup> For example, the famous so-called “Chandimau” pillars (which were, in fact, found at Rājāunā, in the Monghyr District of Bihar, not at Chandimau; see Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 111, n. 148) are not being included, although they probably date from the 6th century. While they are carved of eastern Indian black stone and demonstrate the presence of a local tradition prior to the Pāla period, the pillars depict narrative scenes which are not directly comparable to the iconic sculptures of the Pāla and Sena periods. For information on these pillars, see Alexander Cunningham, *Report for the Year 1871-1872*, ASR, III (Calcutta, 1873; reprint ed., Delhi and Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966), pp. 154-56; Rakhal Das Banerji, “Four Sculptures from Chandimau,” *ASIAR*, 1911-12, pp. 161-66; idem, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas* (Benares: Benares Hindu University, 1933), pp. 171-72. For a thorough examination of pre-Pāla period art traditions in Bihar, see Frederick M. Asher, *The Sixth-Through-Eighth-Century Sculptures of Bihar* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1971; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, T22454, n.d.); for a thorough study of both the Bihar and Bengal materials, see Asher, *Art of Eastern India*.



with long and active histories during the Pāla and Sena periods will be discussed more fully elsewhere in the text, such as in the discussion of the Bodh Gayā and Nālandā schools of sculpture in Bihar and those from Lalmai-Maināmatī, Pāhārpur and Mahāsthāngarh in Bengal. Here, only a few of the most important remains will be selected to define the stylistic developments which led to the emergence of the so-called Pāla and Sena schools. The mature Pāla-Sena idiom, as it is usually defined, does not really occur until the time of the third Pāla emperor, Devapāla, who reigned in the 9th century A.D. For our purposes, the formative period really continues through the reign of the second Pāla emperor, Dharmapāla, in the sense that the art of his reign is still highly dependent on the prototypes and local developments to be studied in this chapter. This fact, along with other evidence of the fortunes of the Pāla kings makes it apparent that the political and artistic developments of the 8th-12th centuries are not always coincidental. One might normally assume that "Pāla art" began with the Pāla dynasty, but since there are no remains which may be definitely assigned to the reign of the first Pāla emperor, Gopāla, who was "elected"<sup>4</sup> king of Bengal in the middle of the 8th century, this assumption thus far remains unfounded. It will also be seen that the decline of the Pāla fortunes in the late 9th and 10th centuries did not witness a decrease in artistic activity, nor was there a noticeable increase when the empire was revived under Mahīpāla I in the late 10th and early 11th centuries. Therefore, while bearing in mind that the term Pāla, and to a lesser extent Sena, is commonly used to define the period under consideration, a dynastic art is not being implied by the association of the names of the Pāla and Sena kings with this artistic development. Indeed, increasingly, the role of other lesser known families in the history and culture of this period make it necessary to use the term "Pāla and Sena" with caution, or only in a most general sense.

The origins and precedents of the Pāla school of sculpture show a variety of stylistic sources, including evidence of Mathurā-Kuṣāṇa contact in the early centuries of the Christian era, wide-spread influence of the late 5th century Gupta idiom of Sārnāth and related sites, and the widely current styles which prevailed throughout India from the western cave sites to east Bengal under the Later Guptas and Gupta-related dynasts. For example, Bodh Gayā sculptures maintain much of the fullness of Mathurā-Kuṣāṇa figure types, while the Buddhist sculptures of Nālandā reveal strong ties to Sārnāth imagery of the Gupta period, and the Hindu remains from Nālandā betray associations with the central and northern Indian styles of the late Gupta and post-Gupta periods. While the stylistic origins of some Pāla styles may be traced to only one source of influence, others reveal the contact of the other two modes, and sometimes even a combination of the three. In addition, some sculptures seem to defy categorization of their stylistic sources. It is thus easy to see why the art of the Pāla and Sena periods manifests such divergent regional and local developments, partly dependent on their derivations of style and iconography and the specific history of contacts with other sites in India.

#### EARLY REMAINS

On the basis of style, an image of Kārttikeya from Mahāsthāngarh, Bogra District, Bengal, may be dated to the Kuṣāṇa period, or slightly later, approximately 2nd or 3rd

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the question of Gopāla's "election," see p. 39 below.

century A.D. (Fig. 1).<sup>5</sup> That Kuṣāṇa influence extended into Bihar and Bengal is well known, both from numismatic and other evidence,<sup>6</sup> and thus, while this sculpture is unique and therefore precious as an example of the early period, its existence is not surprising. It is one of the earliest large stone images found in Bengal and serves as an excellent starting point in marking the influences which led to the later Bihar and Bengal schools of sculpture. Since the beige sandstone from which it is carved is not local, either the raw stone had been imported, or, more likely, the already carved image had somehow been transported to Mahāsthāngarh, where it was discovered at Skanda Dhāp in modern times. There can be little doubt that the sculpture is related to Kuṣāṇa period works found at Mathurā primarily but at other sites in northern India as well. It may be compared both stylistically and iconographically to an image of Kārttikeya dated in the 11th year of an unknown era from Mathurā.<sup>7</sup> The stance of the two figures is almost identical, as are the hand positions and the placement of the spears. In concept, the heavy sashes tied around the hips are the same, although in minor detailing of the drapery, the representations differ slightly. Characteristic of this early date, the figures are of stocky build (approximately four or five heads in height) and the treatment of the bodies is flattened rather than highly modelled. In the Bengal example especially, incision is used to depict the forms of the drapery and jewelry. Later, modulation of surfaces will replace this to some degree although the very thin parallel lines defining the clinging drapery of the garment over the legs remains a feature of Bihar and Bengal stone carving throughout its development.

In Bihar, evidence of early stone sculpture is seen in a large buff-colored representation of Pārśvanātha which was found at Mahābīr Ghāt in Patna, Patna District, but which is now in a private collection in India (Fig. 2). Since it is not carved of the typical grey or grey-black stone used so ubiquitously in later Bihar and Bengal sculptures, there might be some question as to whether it is the product of an indigenous, local craft tradition; however, the Patna area had been an important art-producing center from an early date and there is no reason to doubt that it was a local work. The style of the central figure in particular bears an unmistakable resemblance to the three Jain images from Vidiśā dated in the reign of Rāmagupta (ca. 376-380 A.D.),<sup>8</sup> and thus the piece may be fairly securely dated to the late 4th century. Similar features include the rather angular forms of the bodies of the naked *jinas* with their rather awkward transitions. While this is often a feature of Jain art, here it is apparently a characteristic betraying a transition between the Kuṣāṇa and developed Gupta styles of art.

<sup>5</sup> Asher sees some Gupta and proto-Gupta features in this piece but feels that it is still likely to be of a Kuṣāṇa date (*Art of Eastern India*, p. 11). In my opinion, it is much closer to the Kuṣāṇa-type images than Gupta pieces like the figure of Kṛṣṇa Govardhanadhara in Bharat Kala Bhavan (James C. Harle, *Gupta Sculpture* [Oxford: Oxford University, 1974], fig. 63) or the Kārttikeya image in Bharat Kala Bhavan (idem, fig. 65).

<sup>6</sup> See Madan Mohan Singh, "The Kuṣāṇas in Bihar," *JBR* XLVII, 1-4 (1961): 394-97 [volume bears also separate title, *Mahā-Paṇḍita Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana Memorial Volume*]; M. Harunur Rashid, "The Maināmatī Gold Coins," *BLK* I, 1 (Jan. 1975): 42.

<sup>7</sup> John M. Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California, 1967) fig. 49.

<sup>8</sup> For these images and their inscriptions, see R. C. Agrawala, "Newly Discovered Sculpture from Vidiśā," *JOIB* XVIII, 3 (1969) (cited in Harle, *Gupta Sculpture*, p. 36); G. S. Gai, "Three Inscriptions of Rāmagupta," *JOIB* XVIII, 3 (1969): 247-51; K. D. Bajpai, "Fresh Light on the Problem of Rāmagupta," *IHQ* XXXVIII, 1 (1962): 80-85; Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Indological Notes-Vidiśā Jain Image Inscriptions of the Time of Rāmagupta," *JAIH* III (1970): 145-51; Harle, *Gupta Sculpture*, fig. 20.

Another early image, again from Bengal, shows Viṣṇu with all four arms held in a manner which is common in depictions of the god during the Kuṣāṇa, Gupta and early Pāla periods, that is, with the two back arms in a lowered rather than a raised position (Fig. 3). Examples of this type from the Kuṣāṇa period<sup>9</sup> confirm that iconographically, a Kuṣāṇa date is possible for this representation. However, on the basis of style, the piece should be dated later. Found at Nārhaṭṭa in the Bogra District of Bengal and carved of black stone, which suggests that it is a local product, it bears incipient features of images to be found subsequently in this region. Stylistically, the figure is akin to the 2nd or 3rd century Kārttikeya (Fig. 1) in the stockiness of the body forms, the four-heads high proportions and the relative flatness of the carving. However, the slight softening and rounding of the contours of the body suggest the fluidity of line which culminates in the developments of the Gupta period, thus indicating that this figure is later than the Kārttikeya, possibly dating from as late as the 4th century or perhaps even the early 5th.<sup>10</sup> The drapery appears soft and clings to the body, but the absence of the bulky sash seen in the earlier example may be due to iconography rather than style. The form of the dhoti is strikingly similar to that of the attendant to the proper left of the central figure of Pārśvanātha in the image from Mahābīr Ghāṭ (Fig. 2), suggesting a comparable date, although the greater refinement and sense of fluidity of forms of the Viṣṇu image suggest that it is a slightly later work. It should be noted that the figure of Viṣṇu is adorned with a rather simple crown which does not seem to be decorated with jewels, but has ropelike twisted forms similar to those of a turban. By the end of the Pāla and Sena periods, Viṣṇu will be seen without exception resplendent with jewelled ornaments.

An astonishing stylistic resemblance to the Nārhaṭṭa Viṣṇu is seen in a representation of Nṛsimha at Kheri Hill, Shāhkuṇḍ in the Bhagalpur District of eastern Bihar (Fig. 4).<sup>11</sup> Not only are the body proportions and the stances of the two figures strikingly similar, but their dhotis and the treatment of the *gadā* and *cakra* attributes are also very close. The refinement and perfection of detail seen in the modelling of the torso and carving of the face of the Shāhkuṇḍ Nṛsimha may have once been present in the now worn surface of the Viṣṇu from Nārhaṭṭa. Both carved of dark grey or blackish stone, the Nṛsimha and Viṣṇu

<sup>9</sup> For example, a piece of the late Kuṣāṇa period with this feature is preserved in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, the Avery Brundage Collection, Museum no. B73 S17.

<sup>10</sup> Asher (*Art of Eastern India*, p. 32) dates the piece to the late 5th or early 6th century, which is, I believe, too late, as can be seen by comparing it to dated works of the 5th century, beginning with the 401-2 A.D. materials from Cave 6 at Udayagiri, Bhopal, or later seen in the Māṅkuār Buddha of 427-28 A.D., and still later in the three dated Buddhas from Sārnāth. (For the Udayagiri inscription, see Fleet, *Inscriptions*, pp. 21-25; for illustrations of some of the panels from the cave, see Harle, *Gupta Sculpture*, figs. 8, 11, and 17; for an illustration of the Māṅkuār Buddha, see Harle, *Gupta Sculpture*, fig. 55; and for the most recent comments revising the date of the piece from 448-49 A.D. to 427-28 A.D. or 429 A.D., see Dinesh Chandra Sircar, *Indological Notes—Date of the Mankuwar Buddha Image Inscription of the time of Kumaragupta I*, *JAIH* III (1970):133-37. For inscriptions and illustrations of the dated Sārnāth pieces, see John M. Rosenfield, "On the Dated Carvings of Sārnāth," *Artibus Asiae* XXVI, 1 [1963]:10-26.) The 5th-century pieces show more definitely the refinement and smoothness of typical Gupta period works. Further, the treatment of the lower garment on the Nārhaṭṭa Viṣṇu compares so favorably with that of the attendant figures to the proper left of Pārśvanātha in the image from Mahābīr Ghāṭ (Fig. 2), which is rather securely ascribed to the late 4th century on the basis of its resemblance to the dated sculptures of Rāmagupta's reign, that a 4th-century date seems likely here as well.

<sup>11</sup> Also see Pranab Chandra Roy Choudhury, ed., *Bihar District Gazetteers: Bhagalpur* (Patna: The Superintendent, Secretariat Press, 1962), fig. 6; P. C. Singh, "A Rare Viṣṇu Image in His Kevala Narasimha Form Found in Bhagalpur District," *JAS* V, 3-4 (1963):81-82.

images must both be representatives of a local Bengal style. However, they were discovered at different sites and thus it is not possible to determine at present whether they were manufactured in a single atelier and then later transported, or whether they represent a Bengal style which had gained some currency over a broad area. Since there are so few sculptures of this approximate date from Bengal, my own inclination is to suggest that they were products of a single workshop; there is little evidence of active production at numerous sites during this period. In the figure of Nṛsimha it is easier to identify developed Gupta period characteristics, such as the luxurious hair and the subtlety of modelling; however, since these characteristics appear in dated works of approximately the turn of the 5th century, such as the 401-402 A.D. *dvārapālas* from Cave 6 at Udayagiri, Bhopal,<sup>12</sup> it is still possible to ascribe both the Viṣṇu and the Nṛsimha to the late 4th or early 5th century.<sup>13</sup>

#### MATHURĀ INFLUENCE: BODH GAYĀ

Although Mathurā artistic influence may be detected at other sites yielding pre-Pāla period sculpture, it is most visible and persistent at Bodh Gayā. This site was one of the most important Buddhist centers of the Pāla period; indeed, among the sites associated with life events of the Buddha, it reigned supreme during the 8th-12th centuries. Because of its ancient traditions, it is possible to trace the history of its art from a very early date. In stone, a continuous history can be observed from the Maurya period. Of greatest concern to this study, however, are the remains from the early centuries of the Christian era, since these are the ones which most clearly seem to serve as sources for early Pāla style. Although the Bodh Gayā region has yielded several stone sculptures from the pre-Pāla period, it is problematic to determine how extensive an art production center they represent.

One of the most important pieces from this period is the famous but controversial image of a seated Buddha,<sup>14</sup> dated by its inscription to the reign of one Mahārāja Trikamala in the year 64 of an unspecified era<sup>15</sup> (Fig. 5). While traditionally accepted as referring to the Gupta era, thus giving the date 383-4 A.D. for its dedication, this view has been called into question by various individuals; however, a completely satisfactory alternative has never been put forth. Part of the problem revolves around the place of manufacture of the

<sup>12</sup> See n. 10 above for references relating to the Udayagiri materials.

<sup>13</sup> On stylistic grounds, an image of Neminātha, the Jain *tirthankara*, from Rājgir may also date from this approximate period. An inscription on its pedestal has been read as [Ma] hārājā[ti]rā[ja] śrī-chanda, presumably referring to the Gupta emperor Candragupta II (ca. 380-414 A.D.). See the Appendix, no. 1; also, Rama Prasad Chanda, "Jaina Remains at Rajgir," *ASIAR*, 1925-26, p. 125 and pl. LVIIb. However, recently greater caution has been advised in the reading of the inscription (Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 22), and thus it is not possible to be certain that the piece was dedicated during the reign of Candragupta II. In any case, stylistically the piece clearly belongs to the late 4th-early 5th-century idiom, as may be seen in comparison with other works of the approximate period, especially the dated Rāmagupta pieces and the materials at Udayagiri, Bhopal (see nn. 8 and 10 above).

<sup>14</sup> The figure is referred to as a Bodhisattva in its inscription (Appendix, no. 2), although the iconography of the piece shows that it is clearly a Buddha. Other Buddha images of the same approximate period, such as the famous "Friar Bala" sculptures, are similarly referred to in their inscriptions.

<sup>15</sup> See the Appendix, no. 2; also, Alexander Cunningham, *Mahābodhi or The Great Buddhist Temple under the Bodhi Tree at Buddha-Gaya* (London: W. H. Allen, 1892; reprint ed., Varanasi: Indological Book House, n.d.), pl. XXV; and Rama Prasad Chanda, "The Mathura School of Sculpture," *ASIAR*, 1922-23, p. 169 and pl. XXXVIIIa.

piece since the era implied in the inscription would undoubtedly refer to the ruling family of that region. Although the carving was found at Bodh Gayā, it is not made of the local greyish stone that was apparently widely in use and perhaps quarried nearby during the pre-Pāla period, as evidenced by a number of surviving examples. Instead, it is made of a dark reddish-brown stone. This, of course, does not preclude its having been carved at Bodh Gayā.<sup>16</sup> While an unmistakable stylistic resemblance to carvings from Mathurā exists, the stone used is not the mottled pink Sikri stone so characteristic of the sculptures from that site. Thus, the place of manufacture remains an enigma, clouding the issue of the date as well.

The resemblance of the piece to works from Mathurā, specifically of the Kuṣāṇa period, has led some to believe that the date refers to the Kaniṣka era, but since the date of that era in turn is subject to controversy, this is hardly a helpful solution to the problem. In any case, all reasonable suggestions for the date of the Kaniṣka era range from the late 1st century to the late 2nd century A.D. and a date of the year 64 of that era is clearly too early for the style of the Bodh Gayā piece. Another alternative is the Kalacuri era, equivalent to 248-9 A.D.,<sup>17</sup> and while this is more reasonable in that it yields a 4th-century date for the piece, there is no way at present to connect the find spot of the sculpture, its possible place of manufacture and the currency of the Kalacuri era.

In mode of representation and costume as well as the use of the term Bodhisattva in the inscription,<sup>18</sup> the piece is reminiscent of numerous Kuṣāṇa period examples from Mathurā. Yet the style shows much more fluidity in the transitions of body parts and more smoothness to the contours of the forms than a typical Kuṣāṇa date piece (including, for example, Fig. 1, the Kārttikeya from Mahāsthāngarh). In addition, the facial features, such as the heavy lower lip, the half-closed eyes and high arching brows decidedly point to a Gupta period date (although not as late as a 5th-century date, as seen by comparison to firmly documented 5th century pieces such as those from Sārnāth<sup>19</sup>). Thus, in style, a 4th-century date seems plausible, though it is important to stress the relationship to Kuṣāṇa period works from Mathurā. Rosenfield has pointed out that "the influence of the Mathurā school in eastern India persisted as late as the mid-fifth century A.D."<sup>20</sup> This sculpture is eloquent proof of this view since it is obviously post-Kuṣāṇa in date, yet shows no signs of the weakening of Mathurā impulses. Whether or not it was actually manufactured at Bodh Gayā, it nonetheless documents the presence of the Mathurā style at Bodh Gayā at an early date, a mode which strongly influenced later local schools of carving. In fact, while the inspiration of other sites, such as Sārnāth, is clearly felt throughout Bihar and Bengal, at Bodh Gayā, the Mathurā heritage remains strongest. This, along with the fact that there survives a "cluster" of images from Bodh Gayā of the pre-Pāla period, suggests that Bodh Gayā was one of the first Magadhan sites to develop sculpture ateliers, paving the way for the wide-spread carving traditions of the Pāla period. Since the history of Bodh Gayā goes back long before this time (in contrast to the majority of other art pro-

<sup>16</sup> Frederick M. Asher has strongly argued that the piece was made locally at Bodh Gayā. See his "Bodhgayā Image of the Year 64: A Reconsideration," *JBRs* LVIII (1972):151-57.

<sup>17</sup> For a discussion of the dates for this era, see V. V. Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, IV, pt. I (Ootacamund, 1955), pp. i-xxx.

<sup>18</sup> See n. 14 above.

<sup>19</sup> Rosenfield, "Dated Carvings," figs. 1-2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

ducing centers of the Pāla and Sena periods), this seems all the more likely. It is possible that Bodh Gayā maintained a group of artisans throughout its history. These artists, during the Kuṣāṇa and post-Kuṣāṇa periods, may have had close contacts with the site of Mathurā, the major center of Kuṣāṇa art in northern India, thus accounting for the strong Mathurā impulse in the art of Bodh Gayā. That other influences, for example that of Sārnāth, are also felt may be seen in other examples of Bodh Gayā art (Fig. 17).

Another figure from Bodh Gayā, a standing image of a Buddha, now broken off at mid-thigh, with the right hand held in *abhayamudrā*, offers further evidence of Mathurā-Kuṣāṇa influence at Bodh Gayā (Fig. 6). In this case, however, the work clearly seems to be a local product. It is carved of the local black stone and serves as evidence of early carving in this medium, probably dating from the first half of the 5th century. A striking feature of this representation is the elongated halo with the flame-like motif around its perimeter. The shape of the halo cannot be explained at this early date, although later, by the 8th or 9th century, the halo and body aura are frequently combined and elongated in the characteristic "slab" format of Pāla period stone sculpture (Fig. 113, for example). However, the scalloped edge is a common feature of Mathurā-Kuṣāṇa sculpture.<sup>21</sup> By the Gupta period, it is invariably found in association with floral and gem motifs, but rarely, if ever, appears alone as it does here and in Kuṣāṇa art and thus it is an argument for a pre-Gupta date. On the other hand, the representation of the torso, drapery and head of the Buddha show a great stride towards the mature Gupta idioms, albeit still reminiscent of Mathurā-Kuṣāṇa art. Although the figure is still rather stocky and lacks the slenderness of Gupta forms, the roll of flesh above the waistband, the neckline of the garment and the modelling of the torso seem to predict the developments to be seen at Sārnāth and Mathurā in the next decades. The shape of the nose and the petal-like forms of the lips clearly suggest late 5th century types, but the eyes do not display the softness of modelling and lowered eyelid so typical of later examples. The high position of the hand in *abhayamudrā* raised to the shoulder is a further tie to earlier idioms. Most probably, the image dates from the first half of the 5th century.

Other examples from the Bodh Gayā region which demonstrate the early styles of central Bihar in the black stone medium include a representation of a Buddha seated with legs pendent in the so-called "European posture," that is, *pralambapādāsana* and with hands in the *dharmacakramudrā* (Fig. 7). Although this posture was known in Buddhist art since the Kuṣāṇa period, it did not become common until the 5th century when it appears at Sārnāth and, more particularly, at western cave sites such as Kārli, Kānheri and Ajantā.<sup>22</sup> The Bodh Gayā example seems to show early attempts by artists in this region to depict this posture and indeed some of the difficulties they encountered are clearly preserved in the piece.<sup>23</sup> The waist and top of the thighs of the Buddha are coterminous and the figure completely lacks the normal lower abdominal and hip regions of the body, suggesting that the artists had not yet solved the problems of depicting this particular posture. Probably

<sup>21</sup> See Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts*, fig. 54, for an example of this type.

<sup>22</sup> For illustrations see Walter M. Spink, *Ajanta to Ellora* (Bombay: Marg Publications, n.d.), p. 28, fig. 8; p. 29, fig. 15; etc.

<sup>23</sup> A second piece from the Bodh Gayā vicinity shows similar experimentation in form but may be slightly later. See Susan L. Huntington, *The Origin and Development of Sculpture in Bihar and Bengal, ca. 8th-12th Centuries* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1972; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, DS-72-25,783, 1972), fig. 6.



dating from the mid-to-late 5th century, the rather heavy body forms and round face suggest the persistence of the Mathurā type at Bodh Gayā. When compared to the sculpture from Bodh Gayā dated in the year 64 (Fig. 5), the present piece seems to be a provincial interpretation, for it seems to lack the sureness which comes with the work of the originators rather than the imitators of a style, lending some support to the theory that the year 64 piece was not a local product from Bodh Gayā.

A slightly later grey-black stone sculpture from Bodh Gayā demonstrates the persistence of the Mathurā heritage into the post-Gupta period. The image shows a seated Buddha with his right hand in *bhūmisparśamudrā* leaning against a bolster and having a halo behind his head (Fig. 8). Its inscription appears in letter forms which are transitional between the Gupta period types and those of the early Pāla period, suggesting a date intermediary between the two periods, perhaps the 7th century. Although at first glance the piece seems to resemble documented works of the Gupta period, such as the famous seated Buddha image from Mānkuār, near Bhita in the Allahabad region of Uttar Pradesh,<sup>24</sup> in the shape of the torso and head, it is clearly later than these works. This may be seen in the facial features especially, which have more of the hard edges and accentuated curves to be seen in later, Pāla period works.

#### SĀRNĀTH INFLUENCE

During the Gupta period, the site of Sārnāth emerged as a major center of Buddhist art in India, and, beginning in the 5th century, it supplanted Mathurā as a primary source of stylistic and iconographic influence on the sculptures of Bihar and Bengal. Asher notes that "by the 6th century, Gupta epigraphs are found almost exclusively in Eastern India."<sup>25</sup> If this indicates that Gupta hegemony was mainly in that region, then possibly, artists brought to the east by the Guptas may explain the apparent surge of artistic influence of the Gupta styles during the later Gupta period.

The most unassailable evidence of Sārnāth Gupta influence in the eastern regions is the standing Buddha which was found at Bihārail in the Rajshahi District of Bengal (Fig. 9). Banerji has rightly asserted that had its find-spot not been recorded at the time of its discovery, it could indeed be mistaken for a piece coming from Sārnāth.<sup>26</sup> It is carved of the same Chunār sandstone typical of Sārnāth pieces and seems to be of Sārnāth workmanship as is clearly demonstrated by comparing it to numerous works from that site. In particular, it may be studied in relationship to the three well-known dated carvings of standing Buddhas from Sārnāth.<sup>27</sup> One of them is dated equivalent to 473-4 A.D. and two are dated equivalent to 476-7 A.D.,<sup>28</sup> and thus a date some time around the third

<sup>24</sup> See n. 10 above for information on this sculpture.

<sup>25</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 16.

<sup>26</sup> *EISMS*, p. 17.

<sup>27</sup> See Rosenfield, "Dated Carvings," figs. 1-2; Sheila L. Weiner, "From Gupta to Pāla Sculpture," *Artibus Asiae* XXV, 2-3 (1962), figs. 3-5.

<sup>28</sup> Weiner ("From Gupta to Pāla Sculpture," p. 168) suggests that the earlier of the dated pieces is slightly closer to the Mathurā idiom, in spite of such a short difference in time. The two images from 476-77 A.D. are very similar, in my opinion, and they are different from the earlier image, not because they are further removed from the Mathurā tradition, but rather because they were carved (probably along with others) as part of a set. This is evident in the similar formats, the lotus pedestals, and the shape of the stelae, to name just a few features. Thus, all three images probably demonstrate variations in the sculptural modes prevalent in the last quarter of the 5th century at Sārnāth.

quarter of the 5th century is also likely for the Bihārail piece. Since the Bihārail Buddha is an isolated find, it cannot be said to represent a local school of carving. Instead, it was undoubtedly imported into the region at an early date. Its importance to the eastern school of sculpture is as a document of contact with Sārnāth which substantiates Sārnāth stylistic dissemination during the late 5th century. This Sārnāth influence may be detected in isolated examples remaining from the post-Gupta/pre-Pāla period in Bihar and Bengal, as well as in whole complexes of sculptures such as the Nālandā and Rājgir stuccos to be discussed below.

The fully developed Sārnāth Gupta style in eastern India may be demonstrated by a figure of a standing Buddha, albeit a rather clumsy carving (Fig. 10). This figure is carved out of grey stone which is probably local to the region and thus did not need to be imported from a site to the west of its find place of Nālandā. The Buddha is shown in a standing posture with his right hand displaying the *abhaya mudrā*, and although it may be compared to representations from Mathurā in some respects, it is clear that a great deal of its stylistic inspiration is derived from Sārnāth. For example, when compared to a figure on a stair railing pillar from Mathurā,<sup>29</sup> it may be seen that the features of the faces are not the same and yet the treatment shows remarkable similarity especially in the depiction of the noses and the fully modelled lips. While the eyes of the Buddha figure from Nālandā are more oversized in comparison to the other features of the face, they are carved in an almost identical manner to those of the Mathurā piece. In both cases, the eye is basically shaped like an almond which is divided in half horizontally by the lash line of the upper lid. A second line, approximately parallel to the lower contour of the eye, separates the eyeball from the lid. The proportions of the figure, stocky and short (approximately four heads tall), is also comparable to numerous other examples of the Kuṣāṇa-Mathurā idiom. And yet, certain features suggest the qualities which come to fruition during the Gupta period, particularly at Sārnāth. Most notably, these are the rounding of the contours of the body and the treatment of the drapery, which is without folds except those around the ankles and falling between the arms and the body. This treatment of the drapery in particular suggests strong ties to the 5th century traditions at Sārnāth. In spite of these relationships to the Gupta style, this figure does not even approach the precision to be found in Gupta examples from both Mathurā and Sārnāth—a precision which will subsequently distinguish Bihar and Bengal works dependent upon those modes. For example, in late 5th century sculptures from Mathurā and Sārnāth, the head of the Buddha is generally placed so that the center of his forehead is coincidental with the center of the circular halo behind his head. This is certainly not the case in this representation. The Nālandā image probably dates from the first half of the 5th century when some traces of Kuṣāṇa style were still visible in the art but by which time Gupta stylistic formulations were well developed. In addition, it may be surmised that it documents a provincial tradition rather than the full scale adaptation of Sārnāth style at Nālandā wherein artists from Sārnāth may have actually come to work at the site.

A grey stone image of a Bodhisattva<sup>30</sup> found in a small shrine to the north of the main

<sup>29</sup> Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts*, fig. 25.

<sup>30</sup> The iconography of this Bodhisattva is problematic. The Buddha in his head-dress is in *bhūmisparśamudrā* and thus the Bodhisattva cannot be Avalokiteśvara, as has been assumed in earlier literature, since he would be expected to have a representation of Amitābha in *dhyaṇamudrā* as his insignia. The Buddha, who may be identified as Akṣobhya, probably signals the identification of the Bodhisattva as one of his emanations, representing

shrine at *Chaitya* Site 12 at Nālandā demonstrates the persistence of the late 5th century style at Nālandā, although this example undoubtedly dates from a slightly later period<sup>31</sup> (Fig. 11). It may be compared to a representation of Avalokiteśvara preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi, which was found at Sārnāth,<sup>32</sup> and which is comparable in date to the late 5th century dated examples. Along with many other Sārnāth type images found at Nālandā, it demonstrates that Nālandā art, throughout its development, ultimately may be traced primarily to origins in the Sārnāth style of the late 5th century, although by the 7th century, Nālandā had a distinct style of its own. In this piece, the simplified treatment of the body with the suggestion of the weight being carried by one leg, the slenderness of the body and the apparently clinging drapery, as well as the minimal ornamentation of both the figure and *prabhāmaṇḍala*, show great similarity to the Sārnāth example. The facial features are defined with a crispness of detail, and yet, full modelling of the cheeks and lips adds a new dimension to the flattened carvings of the previous centuries. The *jaṭāmukuta* is typical of late 5th century Sārnāth examples in its simplified treatment of parallel lines, and the size of the image of the Jina<sup>33</sup> Buddha in the head-dress is also indicative of an early date relative to the Pāla-Sena traditions. Later, the crown and head-dress become relatively more elaborate and the image of the Jina Buddha becomes smaller. The Nālandā piece may date from the 6th century, when Gupta influence of the Sārnāth type was still exceedingly strong at Nālandā. Its importance for our purposes, however, is not so much the specific date since this is difficult to pinpoint precisely, but rather its presence at Nālandā is an illustration of stylistic ties to Sārnāth in the pre-Pāla period.

An image of Siddhaikavīra Mañjuśrī carved of black stone is of unknown provenance but relates stylistically to sculptures discovered in Magadha, especially some found at Nālandā (Fig. 12). When compared to the preceding image of a Bodhisattva from Nālandā, it suggests the modifications which occurred in central Bihar one or two centuries after Sārnāth influence was felt. The accented posture (*dvibhaṅga*) has now replaced the more static pose of the previous example and foretells of the angular juxtaposition of

his *karuṇā* aspect as indicated by the lotus flower which the Bodhisattva holds aloft. The *karuṇā* Bodhisattva of Akṣobhya has many names but is probably best known as Vajrarāga in the Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha system. See Ryujun Tajima, *Les Deux Grands Maṇḍalas et la doctrine de l'ésotérisme shingon* (Paris, 1959), pp. 166-72. Although the Bodhisattva is removed from his original context and it is not possible to identify which *maṇḍala* he belonged to, recent research on Tantra has shown that the iconography of the Jinas and their Bodhisattvas was well formulated by at least the 4th century; therefore, the argument that this is a representation of Avalokiteśvara, with the depiction of the Jina still in flux, seems unlikely. For the date of Tantra, see Robert A. F. Thurman's introduction to his translation, *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti: A Mahāyāna Scripture* (University Park, Pa. and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), p. 7; Alex Wayman, *Yoga of the Guhyasamājatantra* (Delhi, 1977), p. 99; John C. Huntington, "An Iconographic Study of Swayambhūnath," in a volume of papers from the Wisconsin Conference on South Asian Studies, 1978, ed. A. K. Narain (Delhi, forthcoming). For the view that this sculpture represents Avalokiteśvara, see Marie-Thérèse de Mallman, "Headdresses with Figurines in Buddhist Art," *Indian Art and Letters*, n.s. XXI, 2 (1947):80-89; idem, *Introduction à l'étude d'Avalokiteśvara*, Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'études, LVII (Paris: Civilisations du Sud, 1948; reprint ed., Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967), pp. 156-57, 176-80.

<sup>31</sup> Asher (*Art of Eastern India*, p. 81) dates the piece to the late 8th century, but I do not believe it is that late in light of what I perceive to be the styles prevalent in Bihar and Bengal just around the time of the emergence of the Pāla dynasty. In addition, Asher (p. 80) describes the piece as being of a deep pink color; however, my field notes indicate that it is a grey color.

<sup>32</sup> Rosenfield, "Dated Carvings," fig. 7.

<sup>33</sup> See n. 30 above regarding the identification of the Jina Buddha.

body parts which typifies figures of the 11th and 12th centuries. The main figure is now ornamented with more elaborate jewelry, especially his arm-bands and necklaces, and his hair style is less stiff than that of the earlier Nālandā Bodhisattva. A most significant development, however, may be seen in the change of the shape of the torso from the 5th century Sārnāth style. While the torsos of earlier figures are often shaped like that of a lion, especially in the slenderness of the waist, the torso of the figure of Siddhaikavīra is almost in the form of the *gomukha* or cow's head<sup>34</sup> which becomes a kind of trademark of many Pāla sculptures. With the two nipples suggesting the forms of the eyes, the waist-band indicating the harness and the general shape of the chest analogous to the head of a cow, the metaphors characteristic of the imagery of the Pāla period become apparent. In style, the features of the face also betray a movement towards the mature Pāla formulation, although still clearly derived from the late 5th century prototypes at Sārnāth. The eyelids are still half-closed in the Gupta manner, but the shape of the lids is no longer a simple curved line. Instead, the curve changes direction three times. The lips undergo a similar transformation, that is, from a more simplified geometric form to a more curvilinear shape. While these modifications impart a sense of liveliness to the expression, just as the accented posture adds an implied movement to the body, in subsequent centuries, these forms become stylizations which seem to crystallize the sculptures into stiff, dry abstractions. The Siddhaikavīra image may be dated to the mid-to-late 6th century, or perhaps even the early 7th century because it is distinctly inspired by the Sārnāth idiom, yet shows the beginnings of the individuality which marks the assertion of the eastern sculptors.

A pink sandstone head of a Buddha was found at Nālandā (Fig. 13) and again bespeaks of Sārnāth influence. The problem of whether this fragment was imported from another place in northern India or whether it was carved at Nālandā may not be resolved since the piece is so small that, even when complete, its stone could have been easily transported either before or after carving. It is possible that this head dates from about the 6th century, not the 5th, but regardless, its style may only be explained in terms of the developments which had occurred at Sārnāth during the late 5th century.

By comparing this fragment to the head portion of a seated Buddha figure found at Telhāra which, like Nālandā, is also in the Patna District of Bihar, we can identify a clear reference to the Sārnāth idiom in Magadhan sculpture of the pre-Pāla period (Fig. 14). Although this image cannot be dated earlier than the 6th century on paleographic grounds, and may date from as late as the 7th century,<sup>35</sup> the derivation of its style is clearly late 5th century Sārnāth, especially noticeable in the treatment of the hair, the shape of the lips and eyes as well as the general structure of the face. The definition of the features, with the heavy use of line to create a sharp edge around the forms, however, marks a departure from the softly modelled facial features of Gupta period works. Typical of this pre-Pāla period, the round halo behind the head of the Buddha is a separate unit from the back of the throne. During the Pāla period, these features will be circumscribed by a common perimeter in many examples, thus unifying the contours of the slab. Because of these

<sup>34</sup> Abanindranath Tagore, "Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy," *JISOA*, Golden Jubilee Number, 1961, pp. 29-39, fig. 15. [Volume bears also separate title, *Abanindranath Tagore*.] (Also published in Abanindranath Tagore, *Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy, and Sadanga or the Six Limbs of Painting* [Calcutta: Indian Society of Oriental Art, 1968]).

<sup>35</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 51.

characteristics, which mark the piece as removed from its Gupta predecessors, but still not yet revealing features of the fully developed Pāla style, the piece may be dated to the late 6th, or perhaps the 7th century.

By the 6th, and especially the 7th century, many of the features which characterize the sculptures of the Pāla period are already visible in the art of Bihar and Bengal. Another black stone image from Bihar demonstrates some of the characteristics which will distinguish the mature Pāla style (Fig. 15). The torso of this seated Buddha is in the shape of a *gomukha*, the shoulders are broad, the arms tubular. The facial features, though smiling, are hardened in the treatment of the outlines of the eyes and lips, which have lost the fluidity of the earlier curvilinear forms. The simplicity of the throne and halo and lack of elaborate pedestal upon which the Buddha sits are clear indications that the image is pre-Pāla in date, but the sculpture is certainly a forceful assertion on the part of the Bihar artists to break away from the Sārnāth traditions. Similar features are visible in another figure of a seated Buddha in *bhūmisparśamudrā*, also from Bihar. Unfortunately, in this example, the head has been lost (Fig. 16.) Here, and in the preceding example, the torso of the figure has a taut quality and sleekness to the forms which precludes a date in the Gupta period, or even very close to the Gupta period. Instead, a greater resemblance of the figures to Pāla period pieces indicates a date around the 7th century for the manufacture of the sculptures.

A standing figure of a Buddha when compared to the 474-5 and 476-7 A.D. Buddhas from Sārnāth shows this movement away from the Gupta style (Fig. 17). Nearly life size, this image presently flanks the entrance to the Mahābodhi temple at Bodh Gayā. Although this may not have been its original location, its provenance is certainly the Bodh Gayā vicinity and the sculpture is testimony to the existence of a post-Gupta, pre-Pāla style at the site. The proportions of the body are shorter than in 5th century Sārnāth counterparts although the figure is still slender. This was also the case in the Siddhaikavira image (Fig. 12), which was shorter but still not stockier than Gupta period examples. The posture is livelier in the slight angle of the torso and of course in the distribution of the weight of the body on the legs. Most noticeable, however, is the change in facial features which earmarks the coming Pāla mode. The face is broad and rounded and almost appears to be a different ethnic type than that commonly seen at Sārnāth during the Gupta period. The incised lines depicting the folds of the garment predict the tendency to activate the surface of the sculpture with added detail which will be seen throughout the Pāla and Sena period developments. Because of the closeness to the early Pāla period sculptures, this piece should be dated in the century just prior to the emergence of the mature Pāla period style, that is, to the late 7th, or possibly, the early 8th century.

The Sārnāth Gupta impetus is visible in pre-Pāla period art not only in isolated sculptural remains but also in whole complexes. At Rājgir, the stucco figures which once adorned the exterior of the central shrine at Maṇiyār Maṭh are clear evidence of this. Although very few sculptures of the Pāla period have been recovered from the vicinity of Rājgir (ancient Rājagṛha), this site served as an important center of Buddhism and Jainism since the time of Śākyamuni and Mahāvīra.<sup>36</sup> The Sārnāth influenced sculptures of Rājgir were part of a development throughout Bihar and Bengal in the 6th and 7th cen-

<sup>36</sup> This lack of sculpture is somewhat of a puzzle and undoubtedly has more to do with the destruction of the site than to the original situation with regard to art production.

turies which served to continue the Sārnāth influences into the Pāla period. The Maṇiyār Maṭh images were first discovered by Cunningham in 1861-1862<sup>37</sup> and were excavated by Bloch in 1905-1906.<sup>38</sup> They have been subsequently completely destroyed save for one very damaged fragment of a figure of Gaṇeśa. The images were dated as early as the mid-4th century by Bloch,<sup>39</sup> to the 5th century by Coomaraswamy,<sup>40</sup> and contemporaneous to the Deogarh sculptures by Weiner who dates the Deogarh reliefs no earlier than the last quarter of the 6th century and more probably in the first part of the 7th.<sup>41</sup> Most recently, Chandra<sup>42</sup> and Asher<sup>43</sup> argue for a date in the 6th century. While I am inclined towards a late 6th or early 7th century date at the latest, my reasons are different from those of Weiner who compares the stucco figure of a standing female, generally identified as a *nāgini* (Fig. 18), to the figure of Devakī in the Deogarh relief of Devakī, Kṛṣṇa and Vasudeva.<sup>44</sup> However, the figure of Devakī seems too broad and stocky compared to the slenderness of the stucco image. The Maṇiyār Maṭh figure better compares directly to a stone example of a female figure from Sārnāth.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, the treatment of the feminine forms of the two figures is almost identical, especially visible in the rounded shoulders, narrow waist, small hips and rounded breasts as revealed through the nearly transparent drapery. The faces, however, are not comparable by any standards and this is not surprising since the Sārnāth piece probably dates from the 7th century and is certainly later than the Maṇiyār Maṭh figure. Her closeness to the Gupta tradition cannot be denied, especially in the treatment of her body, and yet the style of her facial features was not possible before the 7th century which brought influences from western and central India to the Sārnāth region. In addition, her elaborate jewelry would be highly unprecedented if indeed she were of the Gupta period as Rosenfield has suggested.<sup>46</sup> It, therefore, seems probable that the Maṇiyār Maṭh stucco is earlier than the stone figure and dates from the 6th century, or possibly the early 7th, having received the direct stylistic impulses from Sārnāth rather than in diluted form from outlying regions. There is little doubt that the Maṇiyār Maṭh figures are a group, executed at one period of time, since they are so similar in style and therefore they may be dated alike.

At Nālandā, which is situated only about eleven kilometers from Rājgir, evidence for the Sārnāth stylistic source may also be seen. Because of the short distance between Nālandā and Rājgir, it is probable that contact between them never ceased when the two sites were active. Some of the earliest sculptural remains from Nālandā include the stuccos which adorned the exterior of the fifth shell of the *stūpa* at Site 3. This shell was once surrounded by numerous votive *stūpas* containing bricks datable because of the paleography

<sup>37</sup> Alexander Cunningham, *Four Reports Made during the Years 1862-63-64-65*, ASR, I (Simla, 1871), pp. 25-26.

<sup>38</sup> ASIR, EC, 1905-06, pp. 14-15.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Coomaraswamy, *History*, p. 82.

<sup>41</sup> Weiner, "From Gupta to Pāla Sculpture," pp. 170, 173. Her Deogarh dating is obviously much too late, as the temple is almost certainly a monument of ca. 500 A.D.

<sup>42</sup> Pramod Chandra, "Some Remarks on Bihar Sculpture from the Fourth to the Ninth Century," in *Aspects of Indian Art*, ed. Pratapaditya Pal (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), p. 61.

<sup>43</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 23; idem, *Sixth-Through-Eighth-Century Sculptures*, p. 65.

<sup>44</sup> Weiner, "From Gupta to Pāla Sculpture," p. 173. For an illustration of the Deogarh relief, see Madho Sarup Vats, *The Gupta Temple at Deogarh*, MASI, LXX (Delhi, 1952) pl. XVIIIa.

<sup>45</sup> Rosenfield, "Dated Carvings," fig. 8.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

of their inscriptions to the 6th century.<sup>47</sup> The sculptures adorning this layer are therefore considered to be no earlier than the 6th century and some scholars have dated them to the 7th.<sup>48</sup> A comparison of the female figure from Rājgir (Fig. 18) with a representation of Dīpaṅkara Buddha at Nālandā (Fig. 19) shows similarities beyond the resemblance arising from the use of a common medium. Not only are the body proportions alike, slim yet not elongated, but the ease of the posture with the weight of the body slightly greater on one leg is characteristic of both. The placement and treatment of the simplified halos (although probably originally painted) are again worthy of mention. This figure and a number of others from Nālandā probably date from the late 6th, or perhaps the early 7th, century for many of the same stylistic reasons used in dating the Rājgir material, mainly, their resemblance to prototypes, yet their distance from those prototypes as well as the later Pāla period sculptures. It is possible that some of the other stucco figures of this shell, however, are of a slightly later date as indicated by an elongation of the forms and an increased elaboration of jewelry and other adornments. For our purposes, the precise date is not so important as the recognition of the continuing influence of Sārnāth which will be seen to be vital both to the development of sculpture at Nālandā as well as to much of the rest of the Bihar and Bengal traditions.

#### CENTRAL INDIAN INFLUENCES

In addition to the effects of the Mathurā and Sārnāth schools of art on the developing traditions of the eastern regions, a more generalized impetus from northern and central India is visible in the art. An image of Revanta found at Pachār Hill in the Gaya District of Bihar is carved out of the local grey-black stone (Fig. 20), but is stylistically related to many of the carvings found at central Indian sites, most notably, at Deogarh. Although the Pachār image is worn and was possibly never of the quality of the Deogarh sculptures, it may be compared to the male figures directly beneath Viṣṇu Anantaśāyīn on the south side of the Deogarh sanctum.<sup>49</sup> Not only are the hair styles equivalent, but also the boyish proportions of the bodies distinguish them both from the Sārnāth tradition as well as other sources of stylistic influence. Originally, the facial features of the Pachār Revanta must have been quite similar to the Deogarh reliefs. This may be seen by examining the damaged and worn face of Garuḍa in human form from another of the Deogarh reliefs<sup>50</sup> which in its present condition is even more similar to those in the Revanta. While no direct influence or contact between the sites is known, the Deogarh temple serves as an example of the north-central Indian style which typifies the later Guptan influences seen in Bihar and Bengal. Still subject to controversy, with estimates ranging from the late 5th to the 7th centuries, the date of construction of the Deogarh temple is most likely to have been around 500 A.D.<sup>51</sup> and the Pachār relief may be only slightly later, dating from some time in the 6th century.

<sup>47</sup> D. R. Patil, *The Antiquarian Remains in Bihar* (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1963), p. 309.

<sup>48</sup> P. Chandra, "Some Remarks," p. 61; Frederick M. Asher, "Vikramaśīla Mahāvihāra," *BLK I*, 2 (July 1975):111.

<sup>49</sup> Vats, *Gupta Temple*, pl. Xb. For a better photograph, see Harle, *Gupta Sculpture*, fig. 103.

<sup>50</sup> Vats, *Gupta Temple*, pl. Xa; Harle, *Gupta Sculpture*, fig. 104.

<sup>51</sup> I have discussed this monument elsewhere; see Susan L. Huntington and John C. Huntington, *Art of Ancient India* [working title] (Tokyo: Weatherhill, forthcoming).

At present, the Patna Museum holds two groups of sculptures which were found in the vicinity of the Muṇḍeśvarī Hill, in the Shahabad District of Bihar, which further demonstrate the central Indian style in eastern India. The first group has been in the collection for some time and the second group came to the museum in 1969. The sculptures in the most recent lot are in very weathered condition and seem to differ slightly from the first group of sculptures; however, enough similarities in execution exist to allow a general discussion of this material as a body.

Three sculptures from the first group exemplify the style. A standing figure of Kārttikeya (Fig. 21) shows some of the vitality associated with the figure style at Deogarh and yet a seated Kārttikeya (Fig. 22) and a figure of Sūrya (Fig. 23) seem rather static by comparison. They seem to presage the stiffness which becomes characteristic of much of the sculpture of the Pāla and Sena periods. This phenomenon may arise not only from the relative date of production but also from the local idiom of this region of Bihar. However, the proportions of the bodies, the details of dress and even the facial features strongly suggest a common milieu, although more provincial, with the Deogarh carvings.<sup>52</sup> Probably, however, the Muṇḍeśvarī sculptures are later than the Deogarh temple sculptures, perhaps dating from the 7th century.

This date, which has been suggested in literature previously, is supported to some extent by an inscription in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. This document was first edited in 1907 by R.D. Banerji<sup>53</sup> and was re-edited by N. Majumdar in 1920.<sup>54</sup> The inscription may not be translated into the Christian era without difficulty; it refers to a king named Udayasena and is dated in the year 30 of an unspecified era, normally accepted by scholars as referring to the Harṣa era, thus giving a date of approximately 636 A.D.<sup>55</sup> In addition to the possibility that the inscription in fact does not belong to the Harṣa era, or any other known era, and therefore sheds no light whatsoever on the monuments at Muṇḍeśvarī, the relationship of the inscription to the remains at the site is unclear. For one thing, although the inscription refers to a storeroom of "Śrī Maṇḍaleśvara-swāmi-pāda" as read by Majumdar,<sup>56</sup> and the name Maṇḍaleśvara might indeed be associated with the name Muṇḍeśvarī, a reference to a temple of Viṣṇu (Śrī Nārāyaṇa) is difficult to associate with the ruins at the site, especially the famous Śiva temple.<sup>57</sup> It is likely that the Muṇḍeśvarī materials are in fact somewhat diverse and belonged to more than one monument, and may represent more than one period of artistic activity. If there is a span in date for the Muṇḍeśvarī remains,<sup>58</sup> it is probably not greater than a century, judging from the sculptures themselves, all of which seem to be from the 7th century on a stylistic basis. This may be seen in their transitional position between the Gupta period works from which they seem to derive, such as some monuments including Deogarh in central India, and the Pāla period works which follow. By and large, the Muṇḍeśvarī carvings reveal the

<sup>52</sup> That a common artistic milieu exists may also be seen in architectural detailings and decorative motifs which appear at the various sites. See Huntington, *Origin and Development*, pp. 44-45, figs. 30-31.

<sup>53</sup> Rakhal Das Banerji, "The Muṇḍeśvarī Inscription of Udayasena. The [Harsha] Year 30," *EI IX* (1907-8):289-90.

<sup>54</sup> Nani Gopal Majumdar, "The Mundesvari Inscription of the Time of Udayasena: The Year 30," *Ind. Ant.* XLIX (1920):21-29.

<sup>55</sup> For a fuller summary of this inscription and other opinions on it, see Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 292.

<sup>56</sup> N. G. Majumdar, "Mundesvari Inscription."

<sup>57</sup> For the most recent discussion of this temple, see Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, pp. 38-42.

<sup>58</sup> Asher (*ibid.*, p. 40) sees at least two groups of sculptures of different dates.

softness, simplicity and animation of earlier materials in spite of showing a departure from them.

Another major body of materials from eastern India which seems to be associated with the broad spectrum of northern and central Indian art of the Gupta period and later is the group of reliefs which decorate the base (*jagati*) of the temple at Site 2 at Nālandā (Fig. 24). In spite of the importance of these panels, they have been almost neglected by scholars in previous writings.<sup>59</sup> More than two hundred in number, the carvings seem to have been reclaimed from an earlier monument<sup>60</sup> for use in the present setting as may be deduced from the fact that some of the panels seem to have been cut to fit into the allotted spaces, as seen in the elephant panel in Fig. 24. Also, in some cases, pieces which seem to have been made to be placed in a corner occur in mid-wall, thus further suggesting re-use of the stones in a new context. In subject matter, the reliefs show many of the generalized forms which appear in both Buddhist and Brahmanical monuments, including depictions of animals, lovers, meditating figures and musicians, as well as numerous *deva*-like figures (Fig. 24). Since specific deities, such as Śiva and Pārvatī, also appear, it has generally been assumed that the panels represent a Hindu rather than Buddhist assembly. Recently, however, this idea has been called into question.<sup>61</sup> Actually, Hindu deities are often placed in the outer rings of Buddhist *maṇḍalas*, and since the basement of a temple could correspond to such a ring of a *maṇḍala*, the presence of these gods can be seen to be in a clearly Buddhist context. In any case, what is of concern here is the style of the carvings, not their purpose,<sup>62</sup> for their style reveals clear associations with the north-central Indian mode of the late Gupta and post-Gupta type. Again, comparisons to Deogarh come to mind for associations with a Gupta period source, although the style had currency in the 6th and 7th centuries throughout northern and central India. The figures still reveal the gentle sweetness of the Gupta prototypes, having smiling expressions and lowered eyelids in many cases. In addition, their rather minimal jewelry, elaborate head-dresses and generally relaxed postures also reveal ties to Gupta-related materials. However, the decorative motifs which often surround the figures and the detailing of architectural pieces, such as pilasters, suggest ties to later materials of the late 7th and 8th centuries. Thus, again, while a specific date for the carvings is difficult to determine, they appear to be transitional between Gupta period modes and works of later periods, specifically the 8th century. A date of approximately 7th century may be suggested for these reliefs.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> An exception is the article by Krishna Deva and Vasudeva Sharan Agrawala, "The Stone Temple at Nālandā," *JUPHS* XXIII, 4 (1950):198-212. Krishna Deva presented a paper on this temple, "Nālandā Stone Temple (No. 2)," at the Epigraphy and Art History Seminar held at the American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi, 1979 (expected to be published in the forthcoming volume of seminar papers). In addition, Asher (*Art of Eastern India*, pp. 48-49) treats these reliefs.

<sup>60</sup> Amalananda Ghosh, *Nālandā*, 5th ed. (New Delhi, 1965), p. 33.

<sup>61</sup> Asher, "Vikramaśīla Mahāvihāra," p. 111.

<sup>62</sup> It is possible that because reliefs of this type seem to occur in general around a dado or plinth, they may be standard elements in the completion of the iconography of temples of this type and date, just as, for example, the presence of the river goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā flanking doorways to temples also became integral parts of the total concept. It does not appear that these matters were left to the imagination of the artists, as some scholars have suggested, since they are found in so similar a manner at different sites. It is necessary to distinguish the freedom of the execution of the forms, as is often found in these panels, from a freedom of content or subject matter.

<sup>63</sup> In his recent presentation, Krishna Deva ("Nālandā Stone Temple [No. 2]") notes that graffiti inscriptions at the temple seem to be of the 7th century, and he suggests a 7th-century date for both the temple and the reliefs.

The stone reliefs around the base of this temple are one of the few documents of "non-Sārnāth" style at Nālandā in the pre-Pāla period. Nonetheless, they do bespeak a Gupta heritage—that of central and northern India. It is interesting to note that with the possibility of drawing upon both sources for stylistic development, the majority of Nālandā sculptures, both stone and metal, adhere quite strictly to the Sārnāth precepts and very few of the Pāla period images found at the site give evidence of this more generalized type. It is also interesting to note that the two style sources remain quite separate in the Nālandā tradition at least until the 9th century.<sup>64</sup>

Another group of sculptures which gives evidence for the central and northern Indian influence in Bihar and Bengal is a set of *māṭṛkā*s from Saraikela in the Singhbhum District of Bihar. Presently in the Patna Museum, the group was collected in 1949 at the mining office at Saraikela. Presumably, the works were obtained from the vicinity of that office although nothing is known of when or how they came to be assembled in this manner.<sup>65</sup> In my original assessment of these images,<sup>66</sup> I followed the ideas set forth by U.P. Shah and P.L. Gupta who noted the remarkable resemblance of these sculptures to the reliefs and paintings of Ajaṇṭā and other caves in western India.<sup>67</sup> This, I felt, was visible in several of the works, notably an image of Kumārī (Fig. 25), especially in the full, round, high breasts, the heavy forms of the body and certain details of the jewelry and head-dress.<sup>68</sup> Recently, Asher has observed instead a strong relationship between the Saraikela works and those of Orissa.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, he makes a most persuasive case for this association, based not only on the stylistic resemblance between works from each place, but also on the basis of the geographic proximity between Singhbhum District and Orissa—indeed, they are contiguous and at times were apparently part of a single cultural and political entity. Yet, comparison to materials from the western caves reveals strong enough ties that the assertion made by Shah and Gupta cannot easily be dismissed. It may be suggested, therefore, that indeed a relationship to the art of both the east and the west does exist, which might be explained by the existence of a broad style type arising out of Gupta and late Gupta modes which spanned India from coast to coast. Such a suggestion is not, in fact, outlandish, for we do know that at least some of the impetus for Orissan art came from the west,<sup>70</sup> and historical ties between the Early Western Cālukyas, for example, and the kings of Orissa are well known.<sup>71</sup> Thus, it is indeed likely that Asher is correct in observing close ties with Orissan art, and that Shah and Gupta are right in their observation that the Saraikela images relate to works found in the west. The Saraikela pieces are likely to have been made no earlier than the 7th century, on the basis of comparison to works from Ellora,<sup>72</sup> and probably no later than the 8th century. The early suggestion that the pieces

<sup>64</sup> See pp. 109-12.

<sup>65</sup> U. P. Shah and Parmeshwari Lal Gupta, "Sculptures from Saraikela in the Patna Museum," *JOIB* XVIII, 1-2 (Sept.-Dec. 1968):153.

<sup>66</sup> Huntington, *Origin and Development*, pp. 47-50.

<sup>67</sup> Shah and Gupta, "Sculptures from Saraikela," pp. 153-54.

<sup>68</sup> Huntington, *Origin and Development*, pp. 47-50.

<sup>69</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 90.

<sup>70</sup> See my discussion of this idea in Huntington and Huntington, *Art of Ancient India*.

<sup>71</sup> For a discussion of the Cālukyas and Orissa, see Krishna Chandra Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar* (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1961), pp. 221-24.

<sup>72</sup> Huntington, *Origin and Development*, p. 48. Walter Spink has advised me that comparisons can also be made to some late 6th-century forms at Ellora, such as those in Cave 21.



were made in the 12th century<sup>73</sup> is untenable on the basis of the closeness of the pieces to Gupta prototypes as well as the fact that they bear absolutely no resemblance to the stylized, stiffened style which prevailed throughout much of India in the 12th century.<sup>74</sup> Although Saraikela, and the Singhbhum District in general, are outside the main spheres of artistic activity of concern in this volume, sculptures from the region further document the input of late Gupta modes from the broadly defined regions of central India into the east. These, in turn, must have served in some way to help formulate the mature Pāla styles.

The suggestion of a common idiom in the post-Gupta period (or Later Gupta period) from the west to the east may be seen in numerous other examples. While a direct or active contact is not necessarily being implied, it is likely that a kind of commonality of style existed which unified the art of these different regions.

#### SUMMARY OF PRE-PĀLA DEVELOPMENTS

The preceding examples were chosen to illustrate some of the main stylistic strands visible in the Bihar and Bengal regions prior to the emergence of the Pāla emperors and the subsequent development of the so-called mature Pāla style in the 9th century. By no means have all trends or all important works and bodies of works been included, nor has a truly realistic picture of the complexity and diversity of the art of this period been rendered. Yet, in order to understand something of the variety which arises in the styles of the Pāla period, it is necessary to examine the style sources which influenced different regions and sites with various degrees of strength and persistence. Since the sites and regions of northern India during this period were not insular, local traditions alone cannot account for the direction of subsequent stylistic trends in a given locale. For example, it has been seen that both the Sārnāth tradition and that of central India are present at Nālandā, and either one could have served as the major source of stylistic impetus during the Pāla period. In the cases of those sites which manifest the Sārnāth style as the basis for their inspiration, the reasons might have been more than simply aesthetic. Sārnāth was a major center of Indian Buddhism from an early date, and it was a site which was important to the life of the historical Buddha. Thus, it is likely that other Buddhist establishments looked to it as a model. In the case of images, such as those from Muṇḍeśvarī or Saraikela, the artists and patrons had no reason to look to Sārnāth because the icons were not Buddhist. This sectarian or religious aspect of style will become more clear in subsequent discussions. The reasons for local developments are, of course, not always due to religious purposes, but are often related to complex issues such as patronage, financial concerns and location of holy sites. The developments of the Pāla and Sena periods to be discussed in the next chapters will be found to rely heavily on these factors, although artistically, the style sources clearly arise from the idioms described above, perhaps along with others. Sārnāth derivation may be traced from the earliest to the latest Pāla-Sena period examples, as can the more squat figured styles of central or western India.

<sup>73</sup> P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 93-95.

<sup>74</sup> If the pieces date from as late as the late 8th century, it would be possible to explain ties to western India by the fact that Dharmapāla, the second Pāla king, married a Rāṣṭrakūṭa princess (Rakhal Das Banerji, *The Pālas of Bengal*, MASB, V, 3 [Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1915; reprint ed., Varanasi: Bhartiya Publishing House, 1973], p. 53; rpt. p. 13). But I doubt that the works date from the Pāla, rather than the pre-Pāla, period.

## CHAPTER THREE DATED SCULPTURES

A number of dated sculptures from Bihar and Bengal help establish an outline of the stylistic developments which occurred from the 8th-12th centuries in that region. The majority of these images are dedicated in regnal years of Pāla rulers, but a few are dated in the reigns of "intruding" monarchs such as Mahendrapāla, the Pratihāra, or in the reigns of rulers belonging to other ruling dynasties in Bihar and Bengal. Only a few examples are known from the Sena period. Nearly all of these sculptures bear dates given in numerals. However, there is evidence that some inscriptions dating from the period under consideration took the form of chronograms—symbolic words or letters which may be read as numbers.

This chapter attempts to correlate the information found in dated inscriptions on sculpted images with the development of style.<sup>1</sup> It will be seen in the course of this discussion that basically two trends must be followed; that is, the evolution of metal images as well as that of stone sculptures. I have chosen to discuss the dated monuments in strict chronological sequence in order to maintain a clear concept of the remains from each period. However, it will be seen that the metal images and stone sculptures seem to advance their respective styles at different rates (the metal images apparently break away from their earlier prototypes more rapidly), and for the most part, the two trends will be followed by reference to other objects in the same medium.

At the conclusion of the discussion of dated sculptures, it will be evident that many lacunae in the artistic developments will remain. Many of the most important sculptures from this period will be left unexplained since they do not always relate precisely to any of the surviving dated pieces. Those images and the developments out of which they arise will be treated in the subsequent chapters concerned with regional developments which, in turn, are based on the chronological evidence found in this chapter. Each approach, chronological and geographical, will serve to elucidate aspects of the total developments in the hope that, together, they will form a coherent account of the developments of Pāla-Sena period sculpture.

<sup>1</sup> While these epigraphs on sculptures constitute a majority of the dated inscriptions from Bihar and Bengal of the 8th-12th centuries, they are by no means all of the important epigraphs. This study does not deal with copper-plates, manuscript colophons, or other inscriptions not associated with sculpture since these in general do not shed light on the sculptural developments except insofar as they shed light on problems of chronology. For fuller accounts of the dated epigraphs of the period under consideration, see Abdul Momin Chowdhury, *Dynastic History of Bengal (c. 750-1200 A.D.)* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1967); and Bindeshwari Prasad Sinha, *Dynastic History of Magadha, cir. 450-1200 A.D.* (New Delhi: Abhinav, 1977). Since many of the inscriptions give the month and day of the week of the dedication, theoretically, it might be possible to correlate all known dates so that truly accurate dating could be achieved. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sircar for having read and commented upon this chapter on dated images as well as the Appendix. He spent a great deal of time on my behalf, kindly offered to re-read or read for the first time a number of epigraphs and made many pertinent and important suggestions for improving these materials. All errors of omission or commission contained within, however, are my own.

## DATED IMAGE OF THE KHAḌGA DYNASTY

Although in the strictest sense, the dated image of Sarvvāṇī found at Deulbāḍī in the Comilla (formerly Tippera) District of Bengal should be classified as a pre-Pāla piece and therefore could have been discussed in the preceding chapter, it is included here as a document of the direct ancestry of early Pāla castings (Fig. 26). The metal image, which was unfortunately stolen shortly after its discovery,<sup>2</sup> bears an inscription which states that the image represents the goddess Sarvvāṇī and that it was gilded with gold leaves by Queen Prabhāvatī, wife of King Devakhaḍga.<sup>3</sup> Besides supplying important iconographic information, this inscription may be used as a valuable guide to the dating of metal sculptures since Devakhaḍga is known to have lived in the late 7th century.<sup>4</sup> Even if Prabhāvatī outlived her husband and perhaps gilded the image in the early 8th century, the piece could have been made in the late 7th century since it has to have been in existence before it could be gilded. Some have suggested that the Khaḍgas were direct relations of the Pālas and that they were Buddhists, although little is known about them except the names of a few rulers (Table I):<sup>5</sup>

Table I

## Khaḍga Lineage

Khaḍgodyama  
Jātakhaḍga  
Devakhaḍga (m. Prabhāvatī)  
Rājabhāṭa  
Balabhāṭa

The inscription thus confirms what can be seen in style and technique and is supported by history; namely, that the image is a prototype for the earliest Pāla period metal sculptures. The format of the image, with the central figure and her two smaller attendants, becomes a standard formula in Pāla period art. The rounded *prabhāmaṇḍala* unifies the three figures and may be considered to represent the incipient stage of the Pāla period stele format, although it is much more open in its appearance at this time. In Pāla period metal images of later centuries, the *prabhāmaṇḍala* becomes a more dominating feature of the total image, almost paralleling the "slab" or stele format which becomes typical in stone sculptures of the period. Although the *prabhāmaṇḍala* appears as an oval, the upper portion is clearly a half circle as frequently seen in early Pāla period metal and stone sculpture. By the 10th and 11th centuries, the top of the stele will become elongated and

<sup>2</sup> Its companion piece, a representation of Sūrya, however, is preserved in the Dacca Museum. For an illustration of the Sūrya image, see Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pl. LIX.

<sup>3</sup> See the Appendix, no. 4; also, Nalini Kanta Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions from East Bengal," *EI* XVII (1923-24): 357-59; Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pp. 203-4; French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, pl. II; *EISMS*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> The Khaḍgas apparently ruled over ancient Samatāṭa in Bengal during the latter half of the 7th century. The family is little known, although besides the inscribed image of Sarvvāṇī from Devakhaḍga's reign, three copper-plates have been found. These are an unpublished plate of King Balabhāṭa found at Śālbān Vihāra and two plates of Devakhaḍga. For recent views on the dating of the Khaḍgas, see Barrie M. Morrison, *Political Centers and Cultural Regions in Early Bengal*, The Association for Asian Studies: Monographs and Papers, XXV (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1970), pp. 22-24; idem, *Lalmāi, a Cultural Center of Early Bengal: An Archaeological Report and Historical Analysis* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1974), p. 26; Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, p. 141.

<sup>5</sup> See n. 4 above for sources from which Table I was compiled.

pointed. The formative stages of Pāla art may also be noticed in the non-unified arrangement of the multiple arms of the central figure, as yet unconvincing portions of the anatomy. Indeed, they almost appear to be struts, closing the gap between the figure and the *prabhāmaṇḍala*, an effect increased by the elongation of the arms. The separation of parts is again noticeable in the three flowerets behind Sarvvāṇī's head which form a very frail transition to the *prabhāmaṇḍala*. This motif does not commonly occur on other sculptures; invariably, a halo is seen behind the head of the main figure. The stiff and rather clumsy appearance of the central goddess is relieved by the two attendants, standing in accentuated postures, with their halos aslant. Throughout the Pāla and Sena periods, the severity of the central icon in a sculptural group may be alleviated by more lively attendant figures.

## THE PĀLA PERIOD: PROBLEMS OF CHRONOLOGY

Unlike many other periods of Indian history, the Pāla period was fairly well documented by both contemporaneous sources as well as subsequent historical accounts. Contemporaneous sources include the copper-plate inscriptions<sup>6</sup> of the Pāla kings themselves, other contemporaneous inscriptions such as those on images<sup>7</sup> or in the colophons of manuscripts,<sup>8</sup> and various texts including the *Rāmācaritam*<sup>9</sup> and *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*.<sup>10</sup> Later historical accounts in particular are found in Tibetan<sup>11</sup> and Muslim sources.<sup>12</sup> This relative abundance of materials does not mean that all the problems of chronology and history have been solved since the surviving evidence is often contradictory or incomplete. Scholars are frequently in disagreement over the readings of inscriptions and, even when in accord, may find that the data itself is ambiguous. Some of the main problems of Pāla chronology arise from the fact that there are three Gopālas, three Vighrapālas, two Śūrapālas and two Mahipālas among the kings belonging to this dynasty, and the image

<sup>6</sup> A list of the plates found in Bengal is given in Morrison, *Political Centers*, Appendix. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, ed., *The History of Bengal*, vol. 1: *The Hindu Period* [Dacca: University of Dacca, 1943], pp. 173-75 and *History of Ancient Bengal* [Calcutta: G. Bharadwaj & Co., 1971], pp. xxx-xxxiv) provides lists including plates from both Bihar and Bengal. Copper-plate inscriptions are still being discovered; for example, Dr. Enamul Haque, Director of the Dacca Museum, informs me that his institution recently acquired a newly discovered plate of the reign of Dharmapāla.

<sup>7</sup> I have attempted to include all that are known in this chapter; however, it is possible, given the vast bibliography on epigraphic, historical, and art historical topics on this period, that I may not have found them all. During the writing of this volume, reports of "dated pieces" came to me from collectors, but I was not able to get further information on them. Given the rather significant number of dated examples already known, and the apparently fairly widespread practice of inscribing dates on images, I would not be the least surprised if more pieces with dates came to light in the future.

<sup>8</sup> The manuscripts and their colophons have not been studied in the preparation of this volume, except indirectly when the date in a colophon has bearing on chronology in general. The paintings have been left for another scholar to study mainly because I felt that the rather free painting styles do not always contribute anything certain to our knowledge of the sculptural styles and because the study of paintings is tied up with the issue of Indian versus Nepali schools. The latter problem does not affect the study of sculpture and, I felt, might only introduce irrelevant issues to the present volume. For the most up-to-date list of extant manuscripts, see Sarasi Kumar Saraswati, *Pāljuga Chitrakāla* (Calcutta, 1978).

<sup>9</sup> See the discussion on pp. 31-32 below.

<sup>10</sup> See the discussion on p. 31 below.

<sup>11</sup> See the discussion on p. 31. See also George N. Roerich, trans., *Biography of Dharmasvāmin* (Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1959).

<sup>12</sup> For example, Sulaimān (d. 851), Ibn Khurdadbeh (d. 912), Idrīsī (11th century), and Mas 'ūdī (d. 956). See Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 40-41; H. M. Elliot and J. Dowson, *The History of India, As Told by Its Own Historians*, 8 vols. (London: Trubner & Co., 1867-77).

inscriptions are non-specific in their references.<sup>13</sup> Scholars are therefore forced to rely on methods such as paleography and style in the case of sculptures.

Three fixed dates, or possibly four,<sup>14</sup> however, do occur in the Pāla epigraphs, and these may be used as pivot points upon which to base other facts of Pāla chronology. The first is the Sārnāth inscription of *Samvat* 1083, generally accepted as Vikrama *Samvat* and thus is equivalent to 1026 A.D., which records a dedication by king Mahīpāla (I);<sup>15</sup> the second is the Valgūdar inscription of the Śaka year 1083, equivalent to 1161 A.D. which is also given as the 18th year of the reign of king Madanapāla;<sup>16</sup> the third is the Gayā inscription dated in the Vikrama era 1232, equivalent to 1175 A.D. and given as the 14th year of Govindapāla.<sup>17</sup> Since the Valgūdar inscription was only published by D. C. Sircar, its discoverer, in 1949-50, earlier authors (of whom there are many) writing on Pāla chronology did not have the advantage of this fixed date and their proposed chronologies must therefore be studied in that light. Most authors use the fixed dates along with the known reign lengths of the various monarchs to create their chronologies. The reign lengths are deduced from the inscription dated in the highest year for any given king.<sup>18</sup> (Nārāyaṇapāla, for example, is generally assigned a reign length of fifty-four years since there is an inscription giving that year from his reign.) This method, of course, is limited in its accuracy since numerous kings are survived by no known inscriptions from their reigns, and others may have had longer reigns than the remaining evidence would indicate. Because of this, scholars have also relied heavily on the synchronisms between Pāla kings and rulers of other dynasties in other parts of India. These include that of Dharmapāla, the second Pāla king, with the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Govinda III<sup>19</sup> who ruled from 793-814 A.D.; that of Dharmapāla with the Gurjara-Pratihāra king Nāgabhaṭa II<sup>20</sup> who ascended the throne in the early 9th century A.D.; that of Mahīpāla I with Rājendra Coṭa I of Tanjore<sup>21</sup> who reigned from 1012 to 1044 A.D.; that of Mahīpāla I with Gāṅgeya of

<sup>13</sup> See Susan L. Huntington, "Epigraphy from Art History: Studies in the Art of the Pāla Period," presented at the Epigraphy and Art History Seminar held at the American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi, 1979 (expected to be published in the forthcoming volume of conference papers).

<sup>14</sup> The fourth possible fixed date is the Nōṅgaḍh image pedestal which seems to refer to the year Vikrama 1201 (1144 A.D.). See the discussion on p. 71 and the Appendix, no. 55.

<sup>15</sup> See p. 58, Fig. 58, and the Appendix, no. 33. See also Daya Ram Sahni, *Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sārnāth* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1914), pp. 88-89; Francis Wilford, "An Essay on the Sacred Isles in the West, with Other Essays Connected with That Work," *Asiatick Researches* IX (1807): 203-5; X (1808): 129-33; Alexander Cunningham, *Report of Tours in the Gangetic Provinces from Badaon to Bihar in 1875-76 and 1877-78*, ASR, XI (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1880; reprint ed., Delhi and Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1968), p. 182; E. Hultzsch, "The Sārnāth Inscription of Mahīpāla," *Ind. Ant.* XIV (1885): 139-40; J. Ph. Vogel, "Buddhist Sculptures from Benares," *ASIAR*, 1903-04, pp. 221-23, pl. LXIV, 4; Akshay Kumar Maitra, *Gauḍalekhamālā* (Rajshahi: Varendra Research Society, 1319 B. S. [1912]), pp. 107-8.

<sup>16</sup> See the Appendix, no. 56. See also Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," *EI* XXVIII, 3 (1949-50): 137-45; idem, "An Important Date in the Chronology of the Pālas," *JASL* XVII, 1 (1951): 29; idem, "Madanapāla and His Successor," *JASL* XX, 1 (1954): 43-48.

<sup>17</sup> See Fig. 79, pp. 71-72, and the Appendix, no. 57. See also R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 109; rpt. p. 69.

<sup>18</sup> Pāla manuscripts are especially helpful in supplying information about reign lengths of kings, although these are not discussed in this volume.

<sup>19</sup> Rakhal Das Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," *JBORS* XIV, 4 (1928): 492; R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 176; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 161.

<sup>20</sup> R. D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," p. 492.

<sup>21</sup> R. D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," p. 492; R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 176; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 161.

Tripurī<sup>22</sup> whose dates are given as 1015-1040 A.D.; that of Nayapāla and the Kalacuri king Karṇa<sup>23</sup> (1040-1070 A.D.); the conquest of Varendra by Vijayasena after the 8th regnal year of Madanapāla<sup>24</sup> (early-to-mid-12th century) and that of the end of Madanapāla's reign before the known date of Govindapāla.<sup>25</sup> In addition to these synchronisms, some authors have correlated Pāla kings to important personages, such as Atiśa, whose dates have been well established<sup>26</sup> (ca. 981-1054).

Besides the information gained from inscriptions of the Pālas and their contemporaries, the several literary documents which have survived add much to our knowledge of the Pāla kings. While these texts are not always reliable for dating evidence, they frequently supply information concerning the question of patronage of religious and artistic establishments by these rulers.<sup>27</sup>

The Tibetan Lama Tāranātha lived in the late 16th-early 17th century and completed his *History of Buddhism in India*<sup>28</sup> in 1608. While his main purpose was to describe the teachers and doctrines of Buddhism throughout Indian history, he took care to name the kings and rulers who patronized Buddhist establishments, or those who were in power during important periods of Buddhist activity. His writings were done long after the periods he discusses and much of his information is unreliable from an historical point of view.<sup>29</sup> Also, since his writings were done from the Buddhist vantage point, there is little doubt that his opinions and views were biased.

Other texts, even though written during the time of the Pālas, offer incomplete data. The *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*,<sup>30</sup> for example, presents an ambiguity in that the names of the rulers are indicated by initials only—the full names of the monarchs are not given. However, combined with other sources in Pāla history, this text has provided much useful information.

One of the most important literary documents of the Pāla period is the *Rāmacaritam*, written by Sandhyākaranandin, a poet at the Pāla court. Although parts of it were composed during the reign of the son of Rāmapāla, Madanapāla, it is evident that the author had intimate knowledge of the events of Rāmapāla's reign. The text has been edited twice,

<sup>22</sup> R. D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," p. 492.

<sup>23</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 176; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 161.

<sup>24</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 176; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 161.

<sup>25</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 176; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 161.

<sup>26</sup> Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya [also spelled Dines Bhattacharya], "Pāla Chronology—A Reply to Prof. Banerji," *IHQ* VI, 1 (1930): 158.

<sup>27</sup> Surprisingly, the putative patronage of religion and art by the Pāla rulers has not been corroborated by inscriptions or other historical documents of the Pāla period to any great degree. That is, we do not know of even one specific building, monument, sculpture, or painting which was donated by a Pāla king. In a general sense, we know that the kings patronized (and sometimes founded) religious establishments, but thus far it has not been possible to relate these gifts to surviving works of art.

<sup>28</sup> This work is usually referred to as *Gya-gar-chos-'byun*. See Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya, *Tāranātha's History*.

<sup>29</sup> In fact, it may be stated that in general, Tāranātha's knowledge of history became progressively worse the farther back he went in time. This may be observed by a simple perusal of the names of early kings and dynasties, which are much more confused (compared to what is actually known of Indian history) than the later references.

<sup>30</sup> See T. Ganapati Sastri, ed., *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, 3 vols., Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, nos. 70, 76, 84 (Trivandrum, 1920-25); Kashi Prasad Jayaswal, ed., *An Imperial History of India in a Sanskrit Text [Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa]* (Lahore: Motilal Banarsidass, 1934); Ariane MacDonald, *Mañjuśrī, Bodhisattva Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Paris, 1962); idem, ed. and trans., *Le Maṇḍala du Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. Collection Jean Przyluski, III. (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1962); P. L. Vaidya, ed., *Mahāyānasūtrasaṅgraha, Part II: Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1964).



first by its discoverer, Haraprasad Sastri<sup>31</sup> and later by R. C. Majumdar, R. G. Basak and Nanipopal Banerji,<sup>32</sup> and consists of over two hundred verses in *śleṣa* (double entendre) form, which produces two levels of meaning simultaneously. On one level, it is the story of Rāma, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and tells of the deliverance of Sītā by Rāma after killing Rāvaṇa. On the second level, it is the story of the Pāla ruler, Rāmapāla, and how he kills the Kaivarta king, Bhīma, who usurped the territory of Varendrī for a short time. While there could be some ambiguity concerning the content of these verses, a commentary elucidates the meaning of the text. Unfortunately, the commentary is incomplete and many of the verses are obscure because of this. Although the text is biased in favor of Rāmapāla, it still provides one of the main sources of knowledge about the Pālas.

It is beyond the scope of this study to completely reconsider the numerous arguments concerning Pāla chronology except those that have direct bearing on either the dating of art monuments or the implications of patronage of art by the Pāla rulers. The larger task, that of dealing with the fine points of Pāla chronology, is best left to scholars of epigraphy and history. However, it has been necessary to study certain aspects of Pāla chronology in order to arrange even the dated works into their proper sequence. Six main chronological systems for the Pāla dynasty which have been propounded thus far are given in Tables II through VII. Table VIII is a chart of Pāla genealogy as it is known from epigraphs.

Table II

Pāla Chronology According to R. C. Majumdar<sup>33</sup>

King	Known reign period	Approximate accession year
Gopāla I	?	750
Dharmapāla	32	770
Devapāla	39 (or 35)	810
Vigrahapāla I or Śūrapāla I	3	850
Nārāyaṇapāla	54	854
Rājyapāla	32	908
Gopāla II	17	940
Vigrahapāla II	26 (?)	960
Mahīpāla I	48	988
Nayapāla	15	1038
Vigrahapāla III	? [17]*	1055 [1054]
Mahīpāla II	?	1070 [1072]
Śūrapāla II	?	1075
Rāmapāla	42 [53]	1077
Kumārapāla	?	1120 [1130]
Gopāla III	14 (?) [no date]	1125 [1140]
Madanapāla	14 [18]	1140 [1144]
Govindapāla	4	1155 [1158]

\* Brackets indicate Majumdar's revised dates published in 1971 (*History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 161-162).

<sup>31</sup> Haraprasad Sastri, *Rāmācaritaṃ*.

<sup>32</sup> Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, Radhagovinda Basak, and Nanipopal Banerji, *Rāmācaritaṃ of Saṅghyākaranandin* (Rajshahi: Varendra Research Society, 1939).

<sup>33</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:176-77; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 161-62.

Table III

Pāla Chronology According to D. C. Bhattacharyya<sup>34</sup>

King	Approximate reign dates
Gopāla I	700-744
Dharmapāla	744-800
Devapāla	800-839
Śūrapāla I*	839-845
Nārāyaṇapāla	845-899
Rājyapāla**	899-923
Gopāla II	923-980
Vigrahapāla II	980-988
Mahīpāla I	988-1036
Nayapāla	1036-1050
Vigrahapāla III	1050-1076
Mahīpāla II and Śūrapāla II	1076-1078
Rāmapāla	1078-1120
Kumārapāla	1120-1132
Gopāla III	1132-1134
Madanapāla***	1134-1153
Govindapāla	1153-1161

\* When this chart was compiled, Śūrapāla I and Vigrahapāla I were generally believed to have been one and the same.

\*\* It is now known that Rājyapāla must have ruled for at least thirty-seven years. See Fig. 48.

\*\*\* The Valgūdar inscription of the year 18 of Madanapāla's reign, Śaka 1083 (1161 A.D.), was not known at the time this chart was compiled.

The most recent of the chronologies are those of Chowdhury (Table V), Sinha (Table VI) and Sircar (Table VII), along with the revisions made by Majumdar to his older chronology (indicated in parentheses in Table II). Sinha and Chowdhury recapitulate many of the arguments of earlier authors and present many of their own ideas on the dates of the Pāla kings. Although the dates they propose do not correspond year by year, they are roughly parallel, at least by decades. Sircar's chronological scheme is the culmination of nearly a half century's work on eastern Indian epigraphy; not only is he the discoverer of a number of inscriptions relevant to this material, but he is the editor and translator of many of them, as his extensive listing in the bibliography of this volume demonstrates. His first-hand knowledge of the inscriptions of Bihar and Bengal is not surpassed and, indeed, his scheme is highly persuasive and takes into account the latest information about Pāla chronology, as known from stone and copper-plate inscriptions, manuscripts and other sources. However, since my purpose is not to argue a precise date for every object of the Pāla period, but rather to define the main trends and evolution of style characteristics, I have used a generalized date, by decades or portions of centuries, rather than the dates provided by any specific author. Thus, I have essentially used the general dates provided by Sircar, which are for the most part supported by Chowdhury and Sinha, although not year by year. The earlier, mostly outdated chronologies given in Tables II-IV are

<sup>34</sup> Dinesh C. Bhattacharyya, "Pāla Chronology," pp. 167-68.

Table IV

Pāla Chronology According to R.D. Banerji<sup>35</sup>

King	Reign length	Approximate reign dates
Gopāla I	-	730-769
Dharmapāla	40	769-809
Devapāla	40	809-849
Śūrapāla I*	3	849-852
Nārāyaṇapāla	55	852-907
Rājyapāla**	24	907-931
Gopāla II	17	931-948
Vigrahapāla II	26	948-974
Mahīpāla I	48 (52?)***	974-1026
Nayapāla	15	1026-1041
Vigrahapāla III	13	1041-1054
Mahīpāla II	- (2?)	1054-1056
Śūrapāla II	- (1?)	1056-1057
Rāmapāla	42 (45?)	1057-1102
Kumārāpāla	- (1?)	1102-1103
Gopāla III	- (1?)	1103-1104
Madanapāla****	19 (22?)	1104-1126
Palapāla*****	35	1126-1161
Govindapāla	38	1161-1199

\* When this chart was compiled, Śūrapāla I and Vigrahapāla I were generally believed to have been one and the same.  
\*\* It is now known that Rājyapāla must have ruled for at least thirty-seven years. See Fig. 48.  
\*\*\* The numbers in parentheses are possible reign lengths; the others refer to known reign lengths. Banerji accepts the latter.  
\*\*\*\* The Valgūdar inscription of the year 18 of Madanapāla's reign, Śaka 1083 (1161 A.D.), was not known at the time the chart was made.  
\*\*\*\*\* In light of what is known about Govindapāla and Madanapāla from the Valgūdar and Gayā inscriptions, Palapāla cannot possibly have come between these two rulers.

provided to shed light on some of the developments in thinking about Pāla history over the years.<sup>36</sup>  
Table VIII, the chart of Pāla genealogy, gives the relationships among family members which are not always apparent from the straight line of succession given in Tables II-VII. For example, Madanapāla ruled *after* his nephew Gopāla III and thus his name appears a generation before that of Gopāla III in the genealogical table but after Gopāla III in the list of succession. This fact is evident because we know that Govindapāla (not Gopāla III) has to have ruled after Madanapāla as given in the Valgūdar and Gayā inscriptions. Madanapāla ruled from around 1144-5 to 1161-2 since 1161-2 was the 18th year of his reign.<sup>37</sup> Since Govindapāla's 14th year was Vikrama 1232 or 1175 A.D.,<sup>38</sup> he has to have begun his rule by 1161-2 A.D.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> R. D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," pp. 506, 538.  
<sup>36</sup> In the Tables, I have sometimes inserted information given in the text by the authors but not included in their charts or other compilations.  
<sup>37</sup> Valgūdar inscription. See n. 16 above.  
<sup>38</sup> Gayā inscription. See n. 17 above. Dinesh Chandra Sircar ("Three Pala Inscriptions," *EI* XXXV [1963-64]:233-38) believes that Govindapāla was not ruling during the 14th year after his accession.  
<sup>39</sup> There is some difficulty in reckoning dates from the Śaka and Vikrama eras to the Christian era, since the

Table V

Pāla Chronology According to A.M. Chowdhury<sup>40</sup>

King	Reign length	Approximate reign dates
Gopāla I	25 (?)	756-781
Dharmapāla	40	781-821
Devapāla	40	821-861
Vigrahapāla I and Śūrapāla I	5 (?)	861-866
Nārāyaṇapāla	54	866-920
Rājyapāla	32	920-952
Gopāla II	17	952-969
Vigrahapāla II	26	969-995
Mahīpāla I	48	995-1043
Nayapāla	15	1043-1058
Vigrahapāla III	17	1058-1075
Mahīpāla II	5	1075-1080
Śūrapāla II	2	1080-1082*
Rāmapāla	42	1082-1124
Kumārāpāla	5 (?)	1124-1129
Gopāla III	14	1129-1143
[Madanapāla]**	[18]	[1143-1162]

\* A typesetting error in Chowdhury's chart gives these dates as 1080-1182.  
\*\* Madanapāla is not included in Chowdhury's chart, but in his discussion, these dates are accepted so I have added them here. This author rejects Govindapāla and Palapāla as members of the imperial line (pp. 275-76), although he does not deny their existence, and feels that they came after Madanapāla.

Another aspect of Pāla chronology which becomes clear from the genealogical table rather than the lists of succession is the branching of the family into two lines after Gopāla I. Earlier writers often assumed that Vigrahapāla I and Śūrapāla I were one and the same person since they were known to rule at about the same time.<sup>41</sup> The confusion arose because it was not known that Vigrahapāla I and Śūrapāla I were cousins and that they either ruled together simultaneously (perhaps over different territories) or that they ruled in very rapid succession.<sup>42</sup> It is interesting to note, then, that the majority of Pāla kings in fact did not descend from the line through Dharmapāla and Devapāla but rather from Vākpāla and Jayapāla, two men who apparently never ruled.  
Other troublesome aspects of Pāla chronology include the question of Palapāla's place among the rulers of the dynasty. Majumdar flatly rejected the notion that Palapāla

beginning dates of the years do not coincide. Thus, the Christian era date is often listed with two years, e.g., 1161-62. Moreover, D. C. Sircar ("Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," p. 142, n. 1) explains that the last regnal year of one king and the first regnal year of the next king often fall within the same calendar year.  
<sup>40</sup> Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 272-73. Note that the Chowdhury list has been reversed, as he works from the later to the earlier kings.  
<sup>41</sup> See Table II for example. R.C. Majumdar did not have the new information available to him at the time his revised book, *History of Ancient Bengal*, was going through the press.  
<sup>42</sup> This information is known from the Mirzapur plate inscription, which was edited by Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Copper-Plate Grant of Śūrapāla I," *JBRŚ* LXI, 1-4 (1975): 131-48. Sircar corrects aspects of the reading of the inscription by B.N. Srivastava in "Copper Land Grant of King Śūrapāla from Mirzapur," *Sampupa* (*Bulletin of Museums and Archaeology in U.P.*) 5-6 (June-Dec. 1970):67-70, who was followed by B.N. Mukherjee in "A Recently Noticed Evidence Relating to the Pāla Genealogy," *JAS* XIII, 1-4 (1971): 201-4.

Table VI

Pāla Chronology According to B. P. Sinha<sup>43</sup>

King	Approximate reign dates
Gopāla I	755-783
Dharmapāla	783-820
Devapāla	820-860
Śūrapāla and Vīgrahapāla I*	(?) 860-865
Nārāyaṇapāla	865-920
Rājyapāla	920-952
Gopāla II	952-967
Vīgrahapāla II	967-980
Mahīpāla I	980-1035
Nayapāla	1035-1050
Vīgrahapāla III	1050-1076
Śūrapāla II (and Mahīpāla II)	1076-1078/9
Rāmapāla	1078/9-1132
Kumārāpāla	1132-1136
Gopāla III	1136-1144
Madanapāla	1144-1161/2
Govindapāla	1162-1176 or 1158/9-1162**

\* Sinha sees these two kings as ruling simultaneously.  
\*\* Sinha notes that the Gayā inscription can be read as either the 14th year of Govindapāla's reign or the 14th year after (the end of) Govindapāla's reign (p. 226). Thus, the alternate sets of dates are possible. Govindapāla is known from other evidence to have ruled at least four years, so if his rule ended in 1162, he was on the throne by 1158-9.

belonged to the imperial line, thus opposing the view of Banerji. Majumdar suggested that in order to accept Banerji's reading of the Jaynagar image inscription<sup>44</sup> as "Gauḍeśvara Palapāla,"<sup>45</sup> the scholar must imagine that "one letter (ra) was dropped by the engraver through mistake, and another letter (la) was written in line 1 in two different ways, although separated by only one letter."<sup>46</sup> However, the most recent reading of the Jaynagar image inscription reaffirms Banerji's acceptance of this individual and this sculpture will be discussed below.

One last aspect of Pāla chronology that should be discussed here concerns the Sārnāth pedestal inscription dated in [Vikrama] *Sarvat* 1083 (1026 A.D.). Banerji is the only scholar who rejects this inscription as a monument of Mahīpāla I's reign since he contends that it must have been written after Mahīpāla I was already deceased, or, at least, no longer in control of Benares.<sup>47</sup> Since there seems to be no valid reason for this suggestion, it has been discredited and should not be accepted until further evidence supporting it is forthcoming.

<sup>43</sup> B. P. Sinha, *Dynastic History*. In order to have all his information in one chart, I have used his genealogy on p. 250 and the dates for the kings given in his text, pp. 170-243.

<sup>44</sup> See Fig. 80 and the Appendix, no. 59.

<sup>45</sup> R. D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," p. 496.

<sup>46</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:172, n. 1; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 195, n. 264.

<sup>47</sup> See n. 15 above for references to the Sārnāth inscription; also, R. D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," p. 495.

Table VII

Pāla Chronology According to D. C. Sircar<sup>48</sup>

King	Highest regnal year	Approximate reign dates
1. Gopāla I, first king	?	750-775
2. Dharmapāla, son of no. 1	32	775-812
3. Devapāla, son of no. 2	35	812-850
4. Śūrapāla I, son of no. 3	5	850-858
5. Vīgrahapāla I, son of Jayapāla, a cousin of Devapāla	?	858-860
6. Nārāyaṇapāla, son of no. 5	54	860-917
7. Rājyapāla, son of no. 6	32*	917-952
8. Gopāla II, son of no. 7	17	952-972
9. Vīgrahapāla II, son of no. 8	?	972-977
10. Mahīpāla I	48 (also V.S. 1083)	977-1027
11. Nayapāla, son of no. 10	15	1027-1043
12. Vīgrahapāla III, son of no. 11	26	1043-1070
13. Mahīpāla II, son of no. 12	?	1070-1071
14. Śūrapāla II (Surapāla), son of no. 12	?	1071-1072
15. Rāmapāla	53**	1072-1126
16. Kumārāpāla, son of no. 15	?	1126-1128
17. Gopāla III, son of no. 16	14	1128-1143
18. Madanapāla, son of no. 15	18 (Śaka 1083)	1143-1161
19. Govindapāla, son of no. 18?	4?	1161-1165
20. Palapāla, son of no. 19?	35	1165-1199

\* This does not take into account the sculpture bearing the date year 37 (Fig. 48).  
\*\* Sircar takes into account the manuscript dated in the year 53 of Rāmapāla, as do Majumdar in his revised dates (Table II) and Sinha (Table VI).

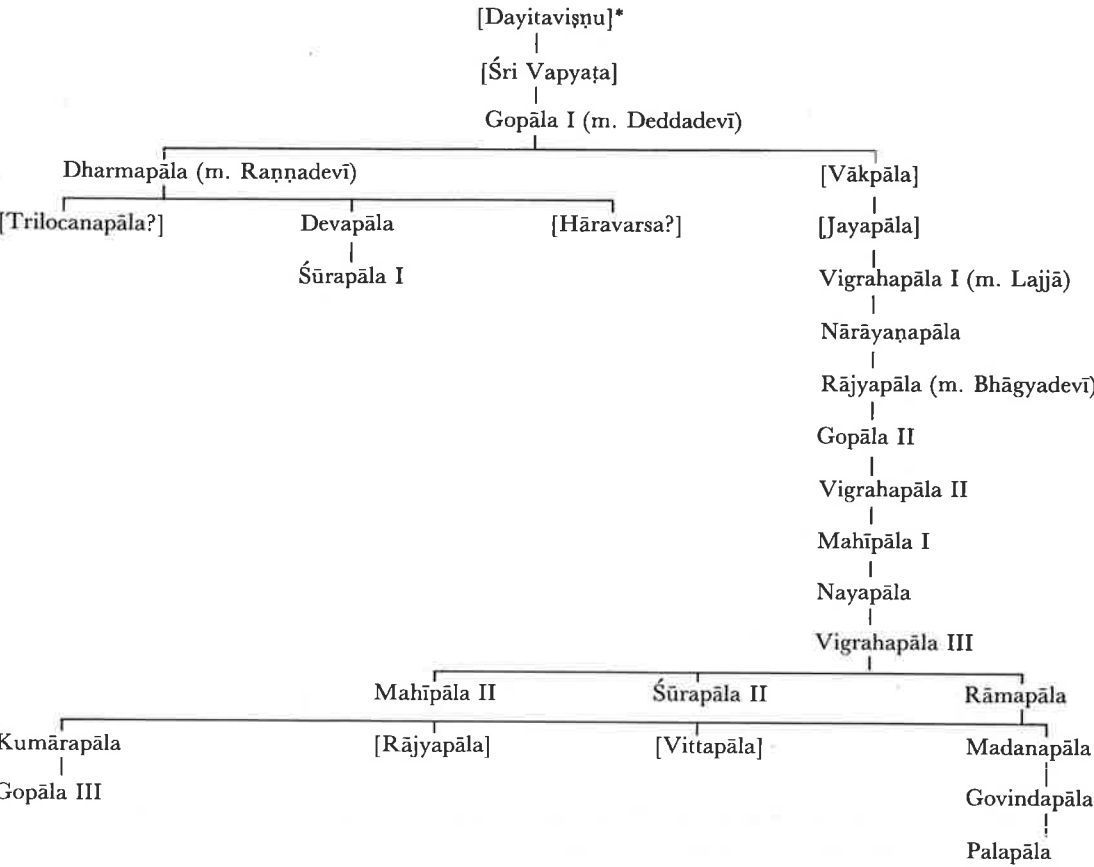
In spite of the various difficulties, Pāla chronology is actually fairly well understood and thus makes an excellent guide to the study of the developments of the art of this period, especially in light of the fact that so many of the epigraphs are on the sculptures themselves. It is expected that new documents which shed light on Pāla history will be discovered and some may in fact alter major aspects of the present state of knowledge; however, it is likely that many of the new documents will reinforce much of what is already known.

DATED IMAGES OF THE PĀLA PERIOD (mid-8th-mid-9th century)

Although obvious, it is probably worth noting that the sculptural tradition of Bihar and Bengal from the 8th-12th centuries is rather unusual among Indian art schools in that there is an almost embarrassing abundance of dated images, to say nothing of other inscriptions in the form of copper-plates, manuscript colophons and the like. In spite of my attempts to include all such dated images in the discussion below, I will not be surprised if a few have escaped my notice. Even today, as more images of the period are being un-

<sup>48</sup> Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Indological Notes—R.C. Majumdar's Chronology of the Pāla Kings," *JAIH* IX (1975-76):209-10; also published, with misprints, in Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Comments on the Pāla Chronology in Dr. R. C. Majumdar's *History of Ancient Bengal*," *JAS* XVIII, 1-4 (1976):97-98. (Also, Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Monthly Bulletin*, Jan. 1976, pp. 8-9.)

Table VIII  
Pāla Genealogy<sup>49</sup>



\* Brackets indicate individuals who apparently did not rule.

earthed, reports of dated pieces are heard now and then. For example, I have recently learned of a dated piece of the reign of Devapāla in a private collection in Boston, which I have been unable to trace. Since the stylistic evolution outlined below is rather continuous and has no major lacunae, I doubt that any new dated piece would drastically alter the present scheme, although I would not preclude this possibility.

Bearing in mind the problems of Pāla chronology as seen in literary and inscriptional evidence, it is necessary at this time to use approximate dates for most Pāla works of art. As the genealogy of the Pāla line is basically agreed upon by most authors, it forms the basis of this discussion. Since I prefer to establish a strictly chronological order for the monuments of this region, the sequence of Pāla kings will be disturbed to permit the inclusion of Pratihāra and Candra monuments in their appropriate places.

GOPĀLA I (ca. mid-8th century)

There are no inscriptions or monuments which may be definitely ascribed to the period of Gopāla I, the first Pāla ruler, who is presently known only through later literary references and genealogies in inscriptions, such as the Khalimpur copper-plate of the reign of Dharmapāla. Traditionally, this plate has been read to suggest that Gopāla was elected (by the people? by an elite?) in order to put an end to the "reign of fishes,"<sup>50</sup> that is, the practice of the swallowing up of the smaller principalities by the larger, more aggressive ones which earmarked the politics of Bengal after the collapse of Śaśāṅka's empire in the 7th century. Following his possible election, Gopāla succeeded in consolidating his holdings over most of Bengal and established a rather durable peace. It is not known whether his rule extended into Magadha, but most probably, it did not. Later references mention that Gopāla and the succeeding Pāla rulers were Buddhists, but it is not known if this is true, and if it is, whether this was a matter of choice or birth in the case of Gopāla. His name, in fact, which means "protector of cows," does not suggest Buddhist leanings,<sup>51</sup> although this is not necessarily indicative of his religious faith.

DHARMAPĀLA (ca. late 8th and early 9th century)

Although Gopāla's empire was probably concentrated in Bengal, Dharmapāla succeeded in bringing much of both Bengal and Bihar under his direct control. It has been suggested that his suzerainty even extended into the Punjab, eastern Rājputana, Mālwā, Berar and perhaps Nepal,<sup>52</sup> although this may be an exaggerated view. While these regions maintained their autonomy, they may have paid obeisance to Dharmapāla.

In spite of Dharmapāla's importance in establishing the political foundations of the Pāla empire, very little is known about the art of his reign. Indeed, the only surviving dated work from this period, a stone lintel with representations of Sūrya, Lakuliśa and Viṣṇu found at Bodh Gayā (Fig. 27), offers little information about the artistic developments of the late 8th and early 9th centuries since it is rather unusual. The inscription to the right of the three figures records the erection of a four-faced Śiva (Mahādeva) in a place called Campeśāyatana by a man named Keśava, the son of a sculptor named Ujjvala and mentions the excavation of a tank costing three thousand *drammas* in the 26th regnal year of Dharmapāla,<sup>53</sup> that is, around 800 ± 10 years. If the image had not been dated, one might be tempted to place it earlier in time than the late 8th- early 9th century, and indeed, because the figures are depicted in a squat, flattened style, it might be assumed that there was a reversion to an archaized mode of carving during the reign of Dharmapāla. This apparent archaism may be noted by comparing the figure of Sūrya in the lintel to the Sūrya

<sup>50</sup> Khalimpur copper-plate inscription of the 32nd year of Dharmapāla. See R. R. Mukherji and S. K. Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions Bearing on History and Civilization of Bengal* (Calcutta: K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1967), p. 110. The idea of the election of Gopāla has been questioned by Chowdhury (*Dynastic History*, pp. 9-12).

<sup>51</sup> For a study of the possibility of kings' names as indicators of their religious leanings, see Buchanan, "Pāla Patronage."

<sup>52</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:109; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 105-106.

<sup>53</sup> See the Appendix, no. 5; also, Rajendralala Mitra, "Transcripts and Translations of Two Inscriptions from Buddha-Gayā," *ASB, Proc.*, 1880, pp. 76-80; Nilmani Chakravarti, "Pāla Inscriptions in the Indian Museum," *JPASB* IV (1908):102; Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 112-13; R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 53; rpt. p. 13.

<sup>49</sup> This chart is my own compilation, taken from various sources.

from Muṇḍeśvarī (Fig. 23), which probably dates from the 7th century, and which seems remarkably fluid and unified when contrasted to the Dharmapāla piece. The articulation of joints and the juxtaposition of portions of the body in the later piece are much more abrupt and would almost seem to revert to the Mathurā idiom prior to the Gupta period. However, it has been shown in the previous chapter that the basic developments of the pre-Pāla period were based on different stylistic traditions and that the use of one in preference to another did not necessarily imply a chronological difference since several traditions seem to have existed at once. This simultaneity of styles will be demonstrated most clearly at Pāhāpur.<sup>54</sup> This sculpture, then, may partially reflect a retardation of stylistic development, but may also simply document the propagation of one of the major modes of pre-Pāla sculpture, perhaps even a localized tradition in Bihar. In turn, such a tradition may have arisen from central Indian/late Gupta modes, judging from the rather squat forms of the bodies, which clearly contrast to the Buddhist traditions of Sārnāth.

A second dated sculpture from the reign of Dharmapāla was already lost when its pedestal bearing the inscription referring to this king was discovered at Valgūdar by D.C. Sircar.<sup>55</sup> Thus, the lintel of the year 26 at present constitutes the only evidence about artistic developments of Dharmapāla's reign.<sup>56</sup> It is unlikely that this sculpture illustrates the full range of stylistic trends in Bihar and Bengal during this period since, it will be seen, in virtually every stage of artistic development during the Pāla and Sena periods, a great deal of variety existed at different sites and in various regions. Possibly, Sārnāth-influenced styles may be traced at sites such as Nālandā during the reign of Dharmapāla, in spite of the lack of documentation. And thus this piece must be seen in its proper perspective—as an example of one style type, but not the total picture.

#### DEVAPĀLA (mainly second quarter of the 9th century)

Under Devapāla, the third king in the Pāla line of succession, the limits of the empire created under his father, Dharmapāla, were apparently maintained as well as increased.<sup>57</sup> While it is believed that he acceded the throne peacefully, it was not possible to maintain the boundaries of the empire without force, and during his long reign, numerous military campaigns had to be staged.

Two metal sculptures from Nālandā, an image of Pañcika (Fig. 28) and one of Hārītī (Fig. 29) bear inscriptions revealing that they were dedicated during the reign of Devapāla.<sup>58</sup> Presently in the National Museum, the two pieces, especially the Pañcika, have been the subject of some confusion in published literature. In his *The Art of the Pāl Empire of Bengal*, French illustrates the Hārītī sculpture along with a representation of one of a Pañcika which is now in the Patna Museum.<sup>59</sup> French mistakenly believed the latter

piece to be the one inscribed with a date in the reign of Devapāla, and indeed, following French, I myself previously thought this to be the case.<sup>60</sup> An analysis of the inscription on the Patna Museum sculpture clearly reveals that it is not dated in the reign of Devapāla, yet, in my opinion, it may have been a pair to the dated Hārītī, as may be inferred from the identical sizes of the two sculptures, their similar style, the fact that the two pieces sustained very similar types of damage to the halos, and of course, because they form an iconographic unit. Thus, while, indeed, the Patna Museum Pañcika may be a sculpture of the reign of Devapāla, it would be so on the basis of association, not inscription.

The representation of Pañcika in the National Museum is dated in the year three of Devapāla.<sup>61</sup> Thus, while it was dedicated towards the beginning of Devapāla's reign, it seems to be much more technically assured and refined stylistically than the examples from the Khadga dynasty or Dharmapāla's reign. As will be seen, it fits well among the documented examples of Devapāla's reign to be discussed below, and thus, it seems likely that during the reign of Devapāla, the artistic tradition made great strides towards what might be called a mature Pāla idiom. Not only is the casting precise and crisp, but the ornateness of the throne and jewelry become a kind of hallmark of later Pāla sculptures. The throne, with its *vyālakas* atop elephants, decorated cross-bars and lion base, becomes a standard feature of numerous images of Devapāla's reign from Nālandā, to be discussed later, and one which is also seen elsewhere in Pāla period art. The rather full, corpulent figure of Pañcika is iconographic, not stylistic, but his rather pointy nose and sharply defined facial features are typical of this period at Nālandā, as will be seen later. Surrounding the halo, the flames are depicted close together, creating a more compact appearance than seen in the Khadga Sarvvānī.

The sculpture of Hārītī (Fig. 29) does not bear a regnal year in its inscription,<sup>62</sup> but stylistically, it seems closely associated with the Pañcika. Not only are the thrones strikingly similar in style, though not identical in form since Hārītī's has a square back outlined with a bead/pearl motif, but other features compare as well. For example, both deities sit atop lotus pedestals made up of simple lotus petals arranged in an upturned fashion and being pointed and slightly sculpted at the tops and centers. In the case of Hārītī, the main figure is slender, and thus is, as will be seen, more typical of sculpture of this period.

A metal image of Balarāma presumably dated in the reign of Devapāla and also from Nālandā gives further insight into both the art of Devapāla's reign and the sculpture traditions of Nālandā during the 9th century (Fig. 30). Its inscription is somewhat controversial, but suggests that the piece was made during Devapāla's reign although a regnal year is not given.<sup>63</sup> Like the representations of Pañcika and Hārītī from Nālandā, discussed above, this sculpture shows a remarkable departure from the styles of the dated images from the Khadga dynasty and the reign of Dharmapāla, especially in the highly unified

<sup>54</sup> See pp. 161-64 below.

<sup>55</sup> See the Appendix, no. 6; also, D. C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," pp. 137-45.

<sup>56</sup> A third object, a votive *stūpa*, has also been ascribed to Dharmapāla's reign, but I have not seen it and do not know if it bears sculptural carving. See Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and Its Epigraphical Material*, MASI, LXVI (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1942), p. 85.

<sup>57</sup> This information is given in the Monghyr copper-plate inscription of the year 33 of Devapāla. See Chaudhary, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 37, v. 12.

<sup>58</sup> See the Appendix, nos. 7-8.

<sup>59</sup> French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, pls. XI-XII. The Patna Museum piece is museum no. 8359. See P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 123.

<sup>60</sup> Huntington, *Origin and Development*, p. 79. I am grateful to Dr. B. N. Sharma of the National Museum, New Delhi, for his extensive help towards establishing the correct identity of the piece.

<sup>61</sup> See the Appendix, no. 7.

<sup>62</sup> See the Appendix, no. 8.

<sup>63</sup> See the Appendix, no. 9. The inscription is actually unclear regarding the reading of the date (note the Ghosh versus Sastri interpretations and my remarks in the Appendix, no. 9). Previous authors have generally accepted the piece as belonging to the reign of Devapāla. See *EISMS*, pl. Ib, pp. 21, 26; French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, pl. X. There has been some confusion in published literature regarding this piece. Patil, for example (*Antiquarian Remains*, p. 637), cites an image of Balarāma (his no. 135a) and one of Saṅkarṣaṇa (his no. 131) as being of the reign of Devapāla. As far as I can determine, these are the same piece.

appearance of the overall sculpture compared to the more open composition of the Khadga Sarvvāṇī. Features such as the *vyālakas* atop elephants, the cross-bars of the architectural structure and the high pedestal become characteristic of Pāla images from this period onwards.

A second sculpture of Balarāma is securely dated in the reign of Devapāla since its inscription records the gift of the image in favor of Mallapora (perhaps the name of a monastery), by the wife of Śiṅgeka, a resident of Maddhu-grāma in Vāhiravana in the 9th year of Devapāladeva<sup>64</sup> (Fig. 31). The image must therefore date from the second quarter of the 9th century. Found at Kurkihār, it demonstrates that, during the reign of Devapāla, regional and local artistic developments were clearly in evidence. When contrasted to the Balarāma from Nālandā (Fig. 30), presumably from the same approximate date, significant differences appear. The face of the Nālandā figure is less broad and the features are more pointed, even taking into consideration the more worn condition of the Kurkihār example. The nose is a much more prominent feature of the face of the Nālandā Balarāma and this tendency will be seen frequently throughout the development of Nālandā metal imagery. Minor detailing, such as the pattern and even style of the dhotis or the head-dresses seem to be a product of local tradition, and perhaps of the workshops at Nālandā and Kurkihār. Since so much of the background of the Nālandā piece is missing, it is difficult to compare this aspect of the two sculptures; however, it is evident that the general configuration was similar although minor differences of detailing, again perhaps suggestive of different workshops, may have been present. A significant variation in stance is seen in the two figures since the Kurkihār example is posed as if the weight of his body is evenly distributed between his two legs while the Nālandā figure stands with his left leg relaxed. It is important to note that this difference is apparently not related to either iconography or date since the two works depict the same deity, are virtually identical iconographically and are from the same approximate period. Probably, the stylistic parameters of the times allowed for such variation.

Like the examples from Nālandā from Devapāla's reign, the Kurkihār Balarāma seems remarkably advanced compared to the Khadga Sarvvāṇī, although its ancestry is still clear. Resemblance to the Khadga piece may be seen in the still lively attendant figures, although their halos are no longer off the vertical axis. In both cases, the lotus petals beneath the feet of the central figures are almost heart-shaped and, below, the pedestals show very little elaboration or decoration. Balarāma's halo is still rounded at the top and yet the surrounding elements no longer appear secondary to the figures or visually unimportant. Instead of the thin, wiry *prabhāmaṇḍala* seen in the Khadga Sarvvāṇī, an elaborate structure composed of elements which often make up a throne back for images in Pāla sculpture, more complete than that of the Nālandā Balarāma, occurs behind Balarāma. The main elements, such as the *vyālakas* atop elephants or the *haṁsas* atop the cross-bars, were common features of Buddhist thrones at Sārnāth during the Gupta period. In fact, the entire configuration may be traced to forms from 5th-century Sārnāth, which have become more ornate and elaborate. The figure of Balarāma has greater solidity and appears more three-dimensional than that of Sarvvāṇī, and the surface of his body is enlivened by more jewelry. Balarāma's legs are shorter in proportion to the rest of his

<sup>64</sup> See the Appendix, no. 10; also, Jayaswal, "Metal Images," pl. XXVIII, fig. L; P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 152-53.

body, giving him a less awkward appearance, and his multiple arms are arranged in a more organic fashion. While the Khadga sculpture is stiff, except for the smile on the face of the main image and the posture of the two attendants, the Kurkihār image is fluid in line and composition and the entire sculpture forms a unified whole. This piece contains many features which become standard forms for Pāla sculptures, appearing in combination or separately throughout the Pāla period. These include: *gomukha* treatment of the torso, throne back or architectural construct with *vyālakas* atop elephants, strings of pearls, *haṁsas*, *vidyādhara*s, the pinion of the umbrella and the decoration of the figure with elaborate jewelry, to name just a few. In addition, this piece shows a very highly developed casting technique which is typical of Kurkihār metal sculptures.

A small metal image of Viṣṇu recently acquired by the Dacca Museum is also believed to date from the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 32).<sup>65</sup> Presumably manufactured in Bengal, the sculpture contrasts sharply with the metal pieces from Nālandā and Kurkihār dating from the reign of Devapāla (Figs. 28, 29, 30, 31) and instead seems to relate more closely to the image of Sarvvāṇī from the Khadga dynasty (Fig. 26), which is, incidentally, also from Bengal. This is notable especially in the rather short proportions of the body, the facial features and the general lack of detail and ornamentation. The other dated metal pieces from Devapāla's reign seem technically much more refined and sleek and, on the whole, they are much more elaborate. A number of possibilities come to mind which could explain such stylistic discrepancies, the most likely of which, it seems to me, would be that during the reign of Devapāla, there were apparently marked differences between the Bihar and Bengal workshops. Thus, the Viṣṇu in the Dacca Museum is most clearly related to another Bengali work, that is, the Khadga Sarvvāṇī, than it is to other images of its same approximate period, namely, the images from Bihar of the reign of Devapāla. Certain features, however, such as the flame motif around the halo, compare well, for example, to that of the Pañcika from Nālandā, and thus seem to clearly corroborate the date.

The image of Viṣṇu is interesting for a number of reasons. The very large depictions of the *gadā* and *cakra* attributes clearly tie the work to the Gupta and pre-Pāla traditions, since as time goes on, the practice of showing all four arms of Viṣṇu in a downward position, and with the *gadā* and *cakra* so prominent, is abandoned. Because of this iconographic feature and the stylistic characteristics, the work looks quite conservative standing among others of Devapāla's reign, and thus, its importance as a document of another type of image from that period cannot be overstated.

The only stone sculpture which may be definitely ascribed to the reign of Devapāla is the figure of Tārā found at Hilsa in the Patna District of Bihar, but presently in the Patna Museum (Fig. 33). The lengthy inscription on this image includes an invocation to Tārā, the Buddhist creed and the statement that it was dedicated in the 25th (or 35th) year of Devapāla by Gaṅgādhara, a lay devotee of the Buddha, and also mentions Nālandā *mahāvihāra*.<sup>66</sup> The date of this sculpture would, therefore, fall toward the end of Devapāla's reign, near the middle of the 9th century.

<sup>65</sup> I am grateful to Ms. Jane Casey of the Fogg Museum, Harvard University, for telling me of the existence of this sculpture and for supplying the photograph. See the Appendix, no. 11.

<sup>66</sup> See the Appendix, no. 12; also, P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 63-64; Surendra Nath Majumdar [also known as Surendranath Majumdar Sastri], "The Hilsa Statue Inscription of the Thirty-Fifth Year of Devapāla," *JBORS* X, 1-2 (1924): 31-36; French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, pl. IX; Kramrisch, "Pala and Sena Sculpture," fig. 6. Regarding the year, 35 versus 25, see my remarks in the Appendix, no. 12.



Ironically, the importance of this image as a chronological milestone is somewhat diminished because, in many ways, it is unusual especially in the details of the architectural framework and the background. However, the figure itself is rather typical and may serve as a basis for dating many other sculptures to the period of Devapāla.

The stylistic origins of the sculpture are somewhat problematic since they have already become somewhat obscured. The treatment of the head may be compared to that of the Kumārī from Saraikela (Fig. 25) in the large, round earrings, the head-bands with the hair showing in curls beneath it, the breadth of the head and face and the way the neck and shoulders are joined. The child on Kumārī's lap even resembles the small figure to the proper left of Tārā, again in the detailing of the earrings and hair styles, although the Devapāla period example is much more crisply carved. However, the slenderness of Tārā differs greatly from the more portly appearance of Kumārī and better compares to sculptures of the Sārnāth tradition.<sup>67</sup> A departure from earlier sculptures, including those of Sārnāth, is seen in the treatment of the back-slab. The figure of Tārā is part of a complicated but unified program of decorating the back-slab, and to a certain extent, loses the predominance often seen in earlier sculptures where a single figure dominated a relatively plain back-slab.<sup>68</sup> All of the forms are basically contained within the perimeter of the back-slab although they occur very freely within its confines. The rounded stele top may be considered one of the main features to be used in the dating of related monuments, since, in a few generations, the rounded slab will give way to a pointed shape.

The Hilsa Tārā is striking in its deeply carved surfaces, both of the figure and the background details. By the late 11th and 12th centuries, the figure will be completely freed from its background and different portions of the stele will be carved in varying degrees of relief, whereas in this and other early Pāla pieces, there tends to be an overall sameness to the depth of carving. In contrast to most other examples of Pāla period sculpture, the motifs of the background in this carving are somewhat difficult to identify and almost appear to be generalized designs rather than specific iconographic elements. For example, the motifs occurring to the outside of each column behind Tārā cannot be unquestionably interpreted as leaves, flowers or flames but simply appear to fill in space or to animate the surface of the stele. This feature contrasts strongly to the specificity of the other Devapāla period images.

The dated documents<sup>69</sup> from Devapāla's reign testify both in stone and metal that a distinctly new formulation of style had emerged by this time in Bihar and Bengal, perhaps

<sup>67</sup> In particular, the Tārā figure might be compared to the Tārā/Bhṛkūṭī from Sārnāth (Rosenfield, "Dated Carvings," fig. 8). Although the Sārnāth piece is certainly earlier in date, it represents the tradition which combines with the mode of the Bihar schools to produce images like the Hilsa Tārā. While both faces are damaged, it seems that the facial features of the two depictions were quite similar, especially in the shape of the eyes and the relatively thin lips.

<sup>68</sup> Contrast this to the three dated Buddha images from Sārnāth. See Rosenfield, "Dated Carvings," figs. 1-2; Weiner, "From Gupta to Pāla Sculpture," fig. 3-5.

<sup>69</sup> Another example of figurative art that has been dubiously ascribed to the reign of Devapāla is a gold coin inscribed with the words *Śrīmān-Devapāladeva*, with a figure of a king (?) on the obverse and one of Lakṣmī on the reverse. See Ajit Ghose [sometimes spelled Ghosh], "A Unique Gold Coin of the Pāla Emperor Devapāladeva," *JNSI* XIII (1951-[52]): 123-25. It has long puzzled scholars that there is virtually no evidence, other than cowrie shells, of Pāla coinage, especially in light of the presumed lavish patronage of religious establishments by these kings. Most scholars have been convinced either that this coin is a forgery or that it belonged to a king of another dynasty, not the Pālas. For recent views on Pāla coinage, see Rashid, "Maināmati Gold Coins," p. 46.

revealing debts to earlier traditions, but synthesizing these into something completely new. With Devapāla's reign, the Pāla style of art truly becomes visible. This emergence of a distinctive art style at this time has led many scholars to suggest that art production under the Pālas resulted from the patronage of these rulers as well as the somewhat stable political conditions they provided for the people, particularly evident beginning with the reign of Devapāla. However, the relationships between the Pāla rulers and the art production during their respective reigns is a subject still to be explored since it is difficult to correlate any of the known works of art with Pāla patronage.<sup>70</sup>

#### ŚŪRAPĀLA I (ca. mid-9th century)

Two very closely related sculptures bear inscriptions stating that they were dedicated in the 3rd or 2nd regnal year of Śūrapāla<sup>71</sup> (Figs. 34 and 35). Although there is a second Pāla king bearing the name Śūrapāla, there can be little claim that these images belong to the reign of the second monarch of that name. Since Śūrapāla II reigned only for a short time, perhaps as little as a year or two, it is unlikely that his name had enough currency to be used as a standard of dating. Further, if indeed he ruled only for a year or two, and these inscriptions are dated in the 3rd year, it is unlikely that they refer to him. In addition, the style of these images and the paleography of their inscriptions testify to their mid-9th century date as opposed to the late 11th century date for the reign of Śūrapāla II.

The two images were found at Uddanḍapura (modern Bihār Sharīf or Bihar City) in the Patna District of Bihar. A majority of the images in the Broadley collection were found in this area, but to the present, this site has not been systematically explored. However, it is known that Uddanḍapura became a major monastic establishment under the Pālas, and even served as a model for Sam-yas, a monastery built in Tibet by Khri-sroṅ-1de-btsan, who ruled ca. 755-797 A.D.<sup>72</sup> Bu-ston credits Dharmapāla, the second Pāla king, with the founding of this monastery,<sup>73</sup> although other Tibetan accounts, including that of Tāranātha,<sup>74</sup> record that it was magically built and then entrusted to Devapāla. It must have been flourishing by the late 8th century, however, if a copy of it had already been built in Tibet by 797 A.D.

It is likely that the two sculptures in question belonged to a set of stelae, probably eight, each one showing one of the major scenes of Śākyamuni's life. Such depictions of the eight scenes became extremely popular in Pāla period art, and are found widely in sculpture, painting and on the many votive *stūpas* of the period.<sup>75</sup> The two scenes depicted here are

<sup>70</sup> This, of course, does not mean that such patronage did not occur. Even if the Pālas gave donations to the monasteries, it is not known if this money was spent in the creation of images and paintings, or, if so, whether the kings had any influence over the artists in the creation of their works.

<sup>71</sup> See the Appendix, nos. 13-14.

<sup>72</sup> See Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *Atiśa and Tibet*, with trans. by Lama Chimpa (Calcutta, 1967), p. 230. Some authors have held the view that Sam-yas monastery was built in 749 A.D., but this date seems too early according to what is known of Tibetan chronology. For a Tibetan account of the building of Sam-yas, see George N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 2 vols., Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal Monograph Series, VII, pts. I-II, (Calcutta, 1949-53), I:44. For a recent note on the temple, see Giuseppe Tucci, "The Symbolism of the Temple of Samye," *Tibetan Review* XIII, 7 (July 1978):16-17.

<sup>73</sup> E. Obermiller, trans., *History of Buddhism (Chos-hbyung)* by Bu-ston, 2 vols. (Heidelberg, 1931-32; reprint ed., 2 vols. in 1, Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, Showa 39 [1965]), II:156-57.

<sup>74</sup> Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya, *Tāranātha's History*, pp. 262-64.

<sup>75</sup> The eight scenes include the Birth, the Māravijaya, the First Preaching at the Deer Park, and the Parinirvāṇa as the four principal events, and the Descent from Trayastriṃśa, the Gift of Honey, the Miracle of Śrāvastī, and the Taming of Nālagiri as the four secondary events.



the Buddha's descent from Trāyastriṃśa (Fig. 34), as may deduced by the figures of Indra (holding the umbrella over the head of the Buddha) and Brahmā (to the proper right of the Buddha) attending him, and the Buddha's taming of the mad elephant, Nālāgiri, which had been released by his evil cousin, Devadatta (Fig. 35).

As in the case of the figure of Tārā from Hilsa, it is not an easy task to describe these figures simply in terms of that which had come before. The clinging drapery worn by both Buddhas is clearly a hold-over from the Sārnāth and Mathurā idioms of the Gupta period, and the stockiness of the figures seems to suggest the continuation of the strictly Mathurā manner of representation, such as had been seen at Bodh Gayā,<sup>76</sup> or, alternatively, may reflect the central Indian idiom which was also present in the pre-Pāla art of Bihar and Bengal.<sup>77</sup> The rounded forms of the trilobate arches behind the two figures recall the rather free and somewhat irregular treatment seen in the decoration of the back-slab of the Hilsa Tārā, and, in fact, this freehand rendering of the forms distinguishes the early Pāla pieces from later ones which become stiff under the restraint apparently imposed by very careful measurement and delineation of the forms.

A sculptured slab bearing representations of the twelve *ādityas* (*Dvādaśāditya*) which is inscribed with a date of the 5th year of Śūrapāla was found at Rājāunā in the Monghyr District, but D.C. Sircar believes had come from nearby Valgūdar.<sup>78</sup> Sircar indicated that he thought the piece belonged to the reign of Śūrapāla I and thus dated from the mid-9th century, although he did not specify his reasons. I presume, however, that in his judgement, the paleography of the inscription met the normal criteria for the 9th century, as opposed to the 11th century, which would be the case if the piece belonged to the reign of Śūrapāla II. Although a photograph of the sculpture has never been published, to my knowledge, Wladimir Zwalf of the British Museum correlated the inscription with an image presently in the storage collection of the National Museum, and thus, the *Dvādaśāditya* slab of the 5th year of Śūrapāla can be used as another landmark in the evolution of the Pāla style (Fig. 36).<sup>79</sup> Stylistically, it fits well into the pattern of 9th-century sculpture, and could hardly be seen to belong to the 11th century or the reign of Śūrapāla II. The figures are rather short and full, have round faces and wear the flattened type of crowns typical of early Pāla period images. They are reminiscent, for example, of the carvings of the slab from the 26th regnal year of Dharmapāla (Fig. 27). In addition, the entire work lacks the very mathematical, precise forms of the later Pāla period. For example, although the twelve *ādityas* are iconographically alike, there are minute differences in size and alignment among the representations, and thus a more free, spontaneous appearance is given to the slab than might occur later in the Pāla tradition.

While this volume was in press, another image from the reign of Śūrapāla (I) came to my attention, but it was too late to include a photograph of it here. The image is a metal

<sup>76</sup> See pp. 13-16 above.

<sup>77</sup> See pp. 22-26 above.

<sup>78</sup> D.C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," p. 140; also, Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "The Ancient City and District of Kṛmilā," *IHQ* XXVI, 2 (1950):141. The inscription on the *ādityas* slab mentions Kṛmilā. Sircar believes that Valgūdar, perhaps along with Rājāunā, comprised the ancient city of Kṛmilā. Also see Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Notes and Queries," *IHQ* XXXIX, 3 (1953):301; idem, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, 2nd ed. (Delhi, Varanasi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971), pp. 248-55. Inscriptions bearing the name Kṛmilā include those in the Appendix, nos. 6, 15, 40, 45 and 56.

<sup>79</sup> I am extremely grateful to Dr. Wladimir Zwalf for sharing this information with me. See the Appendix, no. 15; also, Priyatosh Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions from Bihar," *JAIH* VII, 1-2 (1973-74):102-8.

sculpture of Viṣṇu, about 16 cm. high, said to be from Kurkihār. It was acquired by the Gayā Museum in about 1976 from a private donor and bears the acquisition number 76.1. Its inscription reveals that it was dedicated in the 12th regnal year of Śūrapāla. On paleographic grounds, D. C. Sircar assigns the work to the reign of Śūrapāla I, which indeed seems most likely in light of the style of the image. This inscription thus extends the previously known regnal length of that king by several years. I am grateful to Frederick M. Asher for calling the image to my attention and to D. C. Sircar for reading the inscription for me. Though perhaps found at Kurkihār, the piece is not representative of the Kurkihār idiom.

One last item should be mentioned in association with the reign of king Śūrapāla I, and that is an object excavated at Nālandā, known to me only by its excavation number, S1A 231a and 231b. The sculpture was broken in two pieces when it was found (hence the a and b designations). I do not know what material it was made of, although I presume that it was stone since stone is more subject to breakage than metal; I do not know its size or its subject matter. It was mentioned by Sastri<sup>80</sup> and, later, its damaged inscription was read by D.C. Sircar as containing the name of Śūrapāla, whom he believed was Śūrapāla I.<sup>81</sup> Hopefully, the rediscovery of this object in the reserve collection of some museum will shed further light on the state of sculpture during the reign of Śūrapāla I.

#### VIGRAHAPĀLA I (ca. mid-9th century)

Without explanation, an image showing the Miracle of Śrāvastī from Rohoi, Patna District, inscribed with the date of the 12th or 13th year<sup>82</sup> of Vigrahapāla has been assigned by French,<sup>83</sup> Majumdar<sup>84</sup> and Banerji<sup>85</sup> to the reign of Vigrahapāla III, placing it in the middle of the 11th century (Fig. 37). A simple preview of the sculptures which must certainly date from the reign of Vigrahapāla III (Fig. 68-73) dramatically indicates the stylistic improbability of this assertion which is beyond the differences of medium and subject matter. The Miracle of Śrāvastī might better be compared to the two images of the reign of Śūrapāla I from Uddanāpura in the similarly rough treatment of the forms, the like body proportions of the Buddhas, and even the similar treatment of the lotus petals of the Buddha's Descent scene with those of the Miracle of Śrāvastī. Since the Miracle of Śrāvastī is inscribed with the name of Vigrahapāla but no indication as to which Vigrahapāla,<sup>86</sup> there is no reason to prevent the assignation of this sculpture to the reign of Vigrahapāla I, and therefore to ca. the mid-9th century.<sup>87</sup> As such, it demonstrates a continuum in the stylistic development from the reigns of Devapāla and Śūrapāla I.

<sup>80</sup> Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and Its Epigraphical Material*, p. 113.

<sup>81</sup> See the Appendix, no. 16; also, D.C. Sircar, "Notes and Queries," pp. 301-2.

<sup>82</sup> Cunningham (ASR, III, p. 121) originally read the number as the year 12, although R. D. Banerji (*Pālas of Bengal*, p. 112; rpt. p. 72) read it as 13. S. N. Chakravarti ("Development of the Bengali Alphabet from the Fifth Century A.D. to the End of the Muhammedan Rule," *JRASBL* IV, 3 [1938]:390) reread it as the year 12. B. P. Sinha (*Dynastic History*, pp. 215-16) was confused into thinking there were two separate images.

<sup>83</sup> French, *Art of the Pal Empire*, "List of Dated Pieces," no. 11.

<sup>84</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:174; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. xxxii, no. 51 which he mistakenly lists as an inscription, not a sculpture.

<sup>85</sup> R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 112; rpt. p. 72. For further discussion of this sculpture, see Bloch, *Supplementary Catalogue*, p. 50.

<sup>86</sup> See the Appendix, no. 17.

<sup>87</sup> Since scholars do not provide Vigrahapāla I with a reign length long enough to accommodate a piece dated in the year 12 or 13, it is possible that this aspect of Pāla chronology needs re-examination.

## DATED IMAGES OF THE PRATIHĀRA DYNASTY

## MAHENDRAPĀLA (ca. 890-908)

The strong empire which had been created under Devapāla became weakened under Śūrapāla and Vighrapāla, and by the late 9th and early 10th centuries, the fifth Pāla monarch, Nārāyaṇapāla, was forced to relinquish his holdings in Bihar because the Pratihāras, under Mahendrapāla, succeeded in conquering much of this territory. Some scholars refer to this incursion as the decline of the "first" Pāla empire.<sup>88</sup> Several sculptures found in Bihar are dated in the reign of this intruding monarch, and in fact, serve as important chronological milestones in the documentation of early Pāla period stylistic developments. Although Mahendrapāla was a contemporary of Nārāyaṇapāla, the monuments of Mahendrapāla's reign will be discussed first since his are dated towards the beginning of his reign (that is, the last decade of the 9th century) while the known sculpture of Nārāyaṇapāla's period falls at the end of his known reign in the second decade of the 10th century.

The rough, heavily outlined style visible in the Hilsa Tārā of the Devapāla period, which continued in the broad, freely-rendered style of the Śūrapāla and Vighrapāla stone pieces, becomes even more exaggerated in some of the dated sculptures from the regnal period of Mahendrapāla, the Pratihāra. A stone image of the Buddha subduing the wild elephant Nālāgiri, discovered in Bihar, is dated by its inscription to the 4th regnal year of the Pratihāra emperor Mahendrapāla (Fig. 38).<sup>89</sup> Stylistically, it is closely related to the two examples of life scenes of the Buddha dating from the 3rd or 2nd year of Śūrapāla's reign. In fact, it may have been carved only some few decades later as may be deduced from the chronology of the two kings. The proportions of the entire slab, height to width, as well as the size of the Buddha in relation to the slab, and that of the Buddha to the attendant figure and the elephant, are nearly identical in both representations of the submission of the elephant. This feature is significant since, later, in 11th and 12th century examples, the central figure often occupies less of the central space of the stele while the back-slab becomes a much more imposing element of the composition. The figure of the Buddha in the Mahendrapāla period example compares very well to the Buddha in the "descent" scene (Fig. 34), especially in the treatment of the drapery with the similarly curving lines of the robe going over the proper left shoulders. The short, stocky build of the respective Buddhas, their broad, round faces and the treatment of their hair are also important points of resemblance. Most significant, perhaps, is the lack of precision noticeable in both the Śūrapāla works and that of Mahendrapāla's reign. The thick lines depicting various forms in the sculpture such as the drapery folds, the details of the back-slab and even the heavy manner of incising the inscription of the Mahendrapāla piece, however, distinguish it from the previous examples, especially when compared with several other images dated in the reign of Mahendrapāla.

<sup>88</sup> See p. 51 below.

<sup>89</sup> See the Appendix, no. 60; also, Rama Prasad Chanda, "Indian Museum, Calcutta," *ASIAR*, 1923-24, pp. 101-2; *EISMS*, p. 22. It is unclear whether the term "Bihar" used in describing the provenance of the piece refers to Bihar City (i.e., Bihār Sharif) or the province of Bihar. I have been unable to determine if this is one of the Broadley pieces or not, although that knowledge might help to clarify the problem (see p. 3 for discussion of the Broadley pieces). It should be noted that, although the name Mahendrapāla sounds as if it could belong to the list of Pāla kings, there is no evidence whatsoever from any of the known Pāla genealogies of a king with that name, let alone one ruling at that particular time.

A second sculpture dated in the 4th regnal year of Mahendrapāla<sup>90</sup> (Fig. 39) was found near Bihār Sharif and is presently in the Nālandā Museum. It depicts a Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā*. Stylistically, it belongs to the same development seen in the Hilsa Tārā, which apparently continued through the reign of Mahendrapāla. The style of the carving of this image, and others of this stylistic lineage, is quite distinctive when compared to representatives from other schools of sculpture from Bihar and Bengal, particularly because of the thickness of the incised lines, such as those used in the creation of the background elements here. Precisely why this manner of carving is prevalent among the known dated works of the reign of Mahendrapāla is not known; I have been unable to trace it as a characteristic of Pratihāra sculpture in general.

A sculpture showing the ten *avatārs* of Viṣṇu which is dated to the 8th regnal year of Mahendrapāla was found at Rāmgayā and was noticed by Cunningham in the 19th century.<sup>91</sup> Banerji later located the image in the walls of a modern Śiva temple at Rāmgayā and was able to make a clearer and more complete reading of the inscription.<sup>92</sup> He noted at the time that the figures of the *avatārs* had been heavily whitewashed. A photograph of the carving has never been published to my knowledge. I was unable to see the piece, or to learn if it was still in the location where Banerji had noted it on my visits to the region, and therefore have not been able to include it here. However, it is hoped that in the future it will add to our knowledge of the art of Mahendrapāla's time.

Another dated sculpture (Fig. 40), from the 8th regnal year of Mahendrapāla,<sup>93</sup> stands in marked contrast to the two preceding examples (Figs. 38-39). This stele showing a two-armed figure of Tārā in a standing posture was discovered at Itkhauri in the Hazaribagh District of Bihar. In style, however, the representation is remarkably similar to numerous images from the Gaya District, especially some from Bodh Gayā.<sup>94</sup> Since Itkhauri is not far from Bodh Gayā, the Bodh Gayā radius of stylistic influence may have included Itkhauri. It is also possible that the completed image had been transported to Itkhauri from another place of manufacture, possibly even Bodh Gayā.

Although certain elements of this stele are consistent with those found in other Mahendrapāla period sculptures, a precision of carving sets it apart from them. The architectural construct behind Tārā, with the cross-bars, *vyālakas* and *stūpas* above, have been seen before in Mahendrapāla period sculptures, and yet the lines of the bases of the *stūpas* are especially carefully drawn, the detailing of the cross-bars form a neat pattern and the outlines and shapes of the rampant lions have a delicacy of treatment. The hairdo of the central figure, although related iconographically to that of the Hilsa Tārā, is carved with an attention to detail which had been lacking in the more freely executed piece from Devapāla's reign. This judgement also holds true for the treatment of the jewelry and garments worn by the central figure. This image may derive more strictly from the Sārnāth influenced forms seen as early as the Khadga image of Sarvvāṇī (Fig. 26).

<sup>90</sup> See the Appendix, no. 61.

<sup>91</sup> See the Appendix, no. 62; also, Cunningham, *ASR*, III, p. 123.

<sup>92</sup> See the Appendix, no. 62; also, R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, pp. 63-64; rpt. pp. 23-24.

<sup>93</sup> See the Appendix, no. 63. Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 177, explains that the inscription was only noticed in an Annual Report of the Central Archaeology Department, but never translated. Since the present location of the image is not known, its inscription cannot be studied.

<sup>94</sup> For example, Fig. 103.

Although Tārā's legs and arms are more in proportion to the rest of her body, the treatment of her torso strongly suggests a continuation of the earlier tradition. A much compressed version of the circle and lozenge design seen along the rim of the Khadga *prabhāmaṇḍala* occurs on the cross-bars of the architecture behind Tārā. However, the crowding of the back-slab with numerous iconographic and decorative motifs seen in the Itkhauri Tārā is a bold reminder of the modifications on the Sārnāth style which the Bihar traditions have imposed. Compared to Sārnāth pieces of the Gupta period or slightly later, this lack of simplicity is striking. In the Mahendrapāla period Tārā, it may also be noted that the top of the stele comes to a softened point, marking a clear beginning of the trends to follow.

More crude than the first two examples illustrated from Mahendrapāla's reign, and in striking contrast to the Itkhauri Tārā, is a sculpture of the Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* (Fig. 41). The image was found at Guneri in the Gaya District and is dated in the 9th year of Mahendrapāla's reign,<sup>95</sup> and thus is a product of the late 9th century. Such is the freedom of its rendering that it almost appears to be a folk representation, although perhaps based on the main traditions of Pāla art. The lack of precision is noticeable in the thick outlines and incision of the elements of the stele as well as the lack of careful attention to detailing of the forms. Dating from only one year after the Itkhauri Tārā, the piece can hardly be considered to represent an alteration in the direction of the stylistic developments of the period. Rather, it, along with the first two pieces illustrated from Mahendrapāla's reign, must be seen as illustrating a different idiom than that of the Itkhauri Tārā. In addition, it may have been the work of a less skilled craftsman.

A stone figure of Sūrya from Mahisantosh, West Dinajpur, Bengal, is dated in the 15th year of the reign of Mahendrapāla (Fig. 42),<sup>96</sup> and thus belongs to the early 10th century. Still rather freely executed, with the use of thick incised lines to depict the details, the sculpture is, however, more refined than the Buddhas of Mahendrapāla's reign and belongs with the Itkhauri Tārā in style. The complexity of the stele, with its numerous iconographic elements shown, heralds the elaboration to be seen from this time forward in Pāla period sculpture and is in marked contrast to earlier examples such as the Sūrya from Muṇḍeśvarī (Fig. 23).

It will be seen that the Mahendrapāla pieces are important in helping to establish the chronology of other sculptures which were produced in Bihar and Bengal during the Pāla period. In their own right, they are also interesting since they differ from many other pieces of the same region and approximate date, as well as from the main trends in Pratihāra art of the time. It is not known how these pieces came to be carved, whether they were carved for Pratihāra patrons but for use in Magadha, or whether some other explanation might reveal both the reasons for the stylistic characteristics and the use of the Pratihāra date.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>95</sup> See the Appendix, no. 64; also, *EISMS*, p. 22. I believe this sculpture is now in the Bodh Gayā Museum.

<sup>96</sup> See the Appendix, no. 65; also, S. C. Mukherji, "Mahisantosh Sūrya Image Inscription," *IMB* II, 1 (Jan. 1967): 44-45. In an earlier writing (as stated on p. 45 of his article), Mukherji had ascribed the piece to the reign of Devapāla; he was followed in this belief by Paresh Chandra Das Gupta, (*A Bulletin of the Directorate of Archaeology, West Bengal* [Alipore], no. 1, 1963, p. 12). See also Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Mahisantosh Image Inscription of Mahendrapala, Year 15," *EI* XXXVII, 5 (Jan. 1968): 204-8.

<sup>97</sup> In addition to the pieces included here from the reign of Mahendrapāla, this monarch's name is inscribed on some votive *stūpas* at Nālandā. See Hirananda Sastri, *Nālandā and Its Epigraphical Material*, pp. 106-107.

# DATED IMAGES OF THE PĀLA PERIOD: (ca. late 9th-first quarter 11th century)

## NĀRĀYAṆAPĀLA (ca. late 9th and early 10th century)

It is generally stated that with Nārāyaṇapāla, the "first" Pāla empire came to a close. This statement is misleading since it suggests that Mahendrapāla had succeeded in claiming all Pāla territory, but apparently, Nārāyaṇapāla still maintained some holdings in Bengal during this time. It has also been noted by authors attempting to correlate political and artistic developments that the art of the time of Nārāyaṇapāla (including the art of his contemporary, Mahendrapāla) underwent a decline in quality, although not productivity.<sup>98</sup> The art of Mahendrapāla's reign as evidenced in the dated pieces enumerated above did not indicate an abrupt alteration in the stylistic course of direction from the preceding eras, but rather, brought them to a logical fruition. Scholars noticing only the Buddha images dated in the reign of Mahendrapāla have concluded that these images marked a noticeable decrease in the quality of art production during that time, but the Itkhauri Tārā and Mahisantosh Sūrya images assert the presence of a second trend in art.

Unfortunately, only one image dated in the reign of Nārāyaṇapāla has survived,<sup>99</sup> leaving other possible trends undocumented from this period. The metal sculpture of Pārvaṭī with Kārttikeya seated on her left knee was dedicated at Uddanḍapura in the 54th regnal year of Nārāyaṇapāla (Fig. 43),<sup>100</sup> and thus dates to the early 10th century. Compared to the two metal Balarāma images from the reign of Devapāla, this image has a rough, folk quality to it which is noticeable in the rather bulbous facial features and heavy outlining of the forms of the body and throne. And yet, the configuration of the throne and halo, with the *vyālakas* atop elephants very schematically represented suggests a common source with the forms seen in the Itkhauri Tārā, though much debased.

## RĀJYAPĀLA (mainly second quarter of the 10th century)

A metal sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum and four from the Kurkihār hoard dated in the reign of Rājyapāla testify that the tradition seen in the Balarāma images and the Itkhauri Tārā and Mahisantosh Sūrya sculptures had not been lost. All five of the images date from the latter part of Rājyapāla's reign, probably around the middle of the 10th century. The earliest of the Kurkihār pieces is a pedestal with the main image now missing but showing two *nāgas* emerging out of the base (Fig. 44). The back is incised with a very long inscription which records the gift of the image by one who had been born

<sup>98</sup> For example, *EISMS*, p. 33. Banerji states that "during this troublesome period" the progress of art was much slower than it had been in the preceding century, although more specimens were produced. He then mentions a "renaissance" of art under Mahīpāla I and his immediate successors, making the judgment that the art and politics declined and revived at the same time. See also French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, p. 13.

<sup>99</sup> For discussions of this piece, see *EISMS*, p. 22; Manmohan Ganguly, *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Museum of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad* (Calcutta: Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, 1922), pp. 143-44. In addition, see the Appendix, no. 18 for an inscription which might have been part of an image. The so-called Garuḍa pillar of the reign of Nārāyaṇapāla (Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 150-63) might also be considered a sculpture in a technical sense.

<sup>100</sup> See the Appendix, no. 19; also, Rakhal Das Banerji, "The Pratihāra Occupation of Magadha," *Ind. Ant.* XLVII (1918): 109-11; Devadatta Ramkrishna Bhandarkar, *A List of Inscriptions of Northern India in Brāhmī and Its Derivative Scripts, from about 200 A.C., Appendix to EI and Record of the Archaeological Survey of India*, 1927-36, vols. 19-23 [Calcutta, 1932-38], no. 1619.

in a village in Kāñcī in a family of Brāhmaṇas versed in the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas*, and states that the image was erected in the 28th year of Rājyapāla, on the eighth day of the bright half of Vaiśākha.<sup>101</sup> Since the pedestal alone measures 33 cm. in height, the complete image must have comprised a significant contribution on the part of the donor. Interestingly, a number of the inscriptions on Kurkihār metal images indicate that their donors came from Kāñcī in south India. This important evidence of contact between eastern India and the south is indicative of the extensive travel for religious and trade purposes which characterizes the Pāla period.<sup>102</sup>

Little can be seen from the *nāga* figures except that they appear to continue the Nālandā, not the Kurkihār, style tradition, in spite of having been found at Kurkihār. Since several images (but not the majority) of sculptures recovered in the Kurkihār hoard bear distinct resemblance to Nālandā sculptures, it is possible that a few of these metal images derived from other sources besides the presumed Kurkihār workshops.<sup>103</sup> Also, it will be seen that early images from Kurkihār bear a strong resemblance to Nālandā sculptures in general. This suggests, perhaps, that Nālandā artists came to work at Kurkihār, or that images from Nālandā were brought to Kurkihār at the time the Kurkihār formulations were just being started, or even that the Kurkihār artists had been to Nālandā. The facial features of the two *nāgas* strongly resemble the faces in the Nālandā Balarāma (Fig. 30), although the intervening years have hardened the facial features and have increased a tendency to outline the forms of the face more strongly. The treatment of the serpent hoods behind the *nāgas* as well as the Nālandā Balarāma is comparable and sets them apart from the double outlines seen in the Balarāma from Kurkihār (Fig. 31).

Two images of Vasudhārā dated in the 31st or 32nd year of Rājyapāla's reign, again around the middle of the 10th century, are virtually identical to each other in style and iconography (Figs. 45 and 46). Their inscriptions are also nearly the same, recording the gift of each image by a wife of Gopāla-Hino in the Āpānaka monastery in the 31st or 32nd year of Rājyapāla.<sup>104</sup> In one case (Fig. 45), the wife's name is Gauka; in the other, it is Vātukā. From the inscriptions, it appears that the images were cast by someone named Gopālahorā.<sup>105</sup> Both figures represent Vasudhārā and may be compared to the female attendants in the Kurkihār Balarāma from the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 31) in the round shape of their breasts, the styling of their garments and the proportions of their bodies. The dimpled floral pattern of the garments is also comparable and in fact is a design encountered often in Kurkihār metal images. While the faces of Balarāma and his attendants are too worn to be studied closely, it is probable that the features of their faces were never so crisp and pointy as those of the later pieces. Once again, the *vyālakas*, *haṁsas* and other elements of the thrones reveal the Sārnāth heritage of the forms.

The different shapes of the halos of the two Vasudhārās raise an interesting point: caution must be used when defining physical characteristics as milestones of stylistic development. According to the general trends of Pāla period sculpture, the elongated halo (Fig.

<sup>101</sup> See the Appendix, no. 20; also, Ananta Prasad Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions on the Kurkihār Bronzes," *JBORS* XXVI, 3 (Sept. 1940):246-47; P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 155.

<sup>102</sup> Apparently, travellers from China and Southeast Asia often sailed to India via south India and then went by land to the north. Thus, a number of sites in south India may have served as important stopping points in such journeys.

<sup>103</sup> See pp. 142 and 148 below.

<sup>104</sup> See the Appendix, nos. 21-22; also, P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 149-50.

<sup>105</sup> P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 150.

46) would be supposed to be of a later date than the round one. Since the two images are dated alike by their inscriptions, it appears that a certain amount of choice was given to the artists or craftsman, or at least, that some reason other than pure stylistic progression accounts for the difference between the two pieces. This suggestion is reinforced since the two figures are not only identical in date but in iconography, eliminating the possibility of content being the sole determinant of the form.

The fourth image from Kurkihār dated in the reign of Rājyapāla is a representation of Umā-Maheśvara (Fig. 47). Its inscription indicates that it was dedicated at the same time as the two Vasudhārās, that is, in the 31st or 32nd year of Rājyapāla,<sup>106</sup> around the middle of the 10th century. The Brahmanical subject of this sculpture is handled in a virtually identical manner to that of the Buddhist images of Vasudhārā and its donation by the wife of a resident of a presumably Buddhist monastery<sup>107</sup> is strong evidence of the existence of a common artistic community shared by all. The stylistic similarity between the two Vasudhārās and the Umā-Maheśvara and the fact that all three were dedicated within a very short time of each other by people hailing from the vicinity of the Āpānaka monastery (wherever it may be—its exact identification is not known at present) strongly suggests that the images had been commissioned from one workshop, perhaps one which was patronized by this particular monastery. This workshop may have been at Kurkihār itself and may have served in the provision of images for pilgrims and worshippers visiting the site. The earliest Pāla period examples of images of Umā-Maheśvara in general derive from the local Bihar idiom seen at sites such as Saraikela,<sup>108</sup> but it is evident that by the time of this metal image, non-Buddhist subjects were also portrayed in the main traditions of the Pāla style. The pointed features of the faces and the angular positions of the limbs eventually harden into the stylized forms of the 11th and 12th centuries, to be seen primarily in Bengal.

The fifth sculpture from the reign of Rājyapāla is the example in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 48). Although its provenance is unknown, its inscription mentions that the donor was from the Rājgir area, as well as indicates that the piece was dedicated in the 37th year of the reign of Rājyapāla,<sup>109</sup> ca. mid-10th century. It should be noted that none of the authors of Tables II-VII were aware of this image dated in the year 37 of Rājyapāla and thus this portion of each of the chronologies should be revised.<sup>110</sup> The Victoria and Albert piece represents Balarāma<sup>111</sup> and is in much more worn condition than the sculptures from Kurkihār; however, it exhibits a similar skill in craftsmanship. The composition is much more simplified than seen in either of the representations of Balarāma from the reign of Devapāla (Figs. 30 and 31) especially in the relatively plain square architectural structure. The puffy, but flattened cloud or flame-like forms around the *nāga* hood of Balarāma are seen in other dated images of this approximate period (Figs. 45-47) and serve to help date other uninscribed images to this period.

<sup>106</sup> See the Appendix, no. 23; also, P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 153.

<sup>107</sup> The Āpānaka monastery is also mentioned in an inscription on a Buddha image from Mathurā. See P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 149, n. 4.

<sup>108</sup> Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 41.

<sup>109</sup> See the Appendix, no. 24.

<sup>110</sup> The necessity for revision of this aspect of Pāla chronology was pointed out by Sadashiv Gorakshkar, "Some Inscribed Balarāma Images from Eastern India," *Lalit Kalā* 19 (1978): pp. 27-32.

<sup>111</sup> It is striking to me that three of the dated pieces (if one includes the Nālandā piece presumed to be of Devapāla's reign, Fig. 30) of the Pāla period are depictions of Balarāma. Except for these dated images, the subject itself is not noticeably popular during this period.

## GOPĀLA II (ca. middle or third quarter of the 10th century)

On the basis of style and paleography, an image of Vāgīśvarī inscribed with the name of Gopāla may be assigned to the reign of Gopāla II in preference to Gopālas I and III (Fig. 49). This sculpture was found by Cunningham<sup>112</sup> in the late 19th century at Nālandā and later formed part of the Broadley collection, but is presently in the Indian Museum. According to its inscription, it was dedicated in the first year of the reign of Gopāla,<sup>113</sup> and thus it belongs to the mid-10th century. In style, the figure belongs to the same tradition as the Tārā from Itkhauri and it appears that the fifty or more years between them has not brought startling changes. If anything, the round shape of this stele, coming to only a very modified point at the top, suggests close ties to the earlier Pāla period sculptures.

The place of this sculpture in the reign of Gopāla II may be seen easily not only in its closeness to the Itkhauri Tārā, which came slightly before it, but also by comparison to sculptures from the reign of Mahīpāla I, a few years later (Figs. 52 and 53). Most worthy of notice are the similar ovoid halos, the rounded stelae with only subtle attenuation at the tops, resemblance of facial features between the Viṣṇu (Fig. 52) and Vāgīśvarī and the general degree of ornamentation in the sculptures. There can be little doubt that the figure of Vāgīśvarī does not belong to the reign of Gopāla I, the founder of the Pāla dynasty, because stylistically this would be improbable. It is also highly unlikely that the image would date from the reign of Gopāla III since that king ruled in the 12th century and this image does not conform on any standards to sculptures of that period.

A second sculpture from the reign of Gopāla II is the representation of Gaṇeśa found at Mandhuk near Chandina in the Comilla (formerly Tippera) District of Bengal (Fig. 50). Like the image of Vāgīśvarī, it is dedicated in the first year of the reign of the king,<sup>114</sup> and thus also dates from the mid-10th century. However, in style, it better compares with sculptures from the reign of Mahīpāla I, particularly another image of Gaṇeśa (Fig. 53). Interestingly, both inscriptions mention an individual named Jambhalamitra, who may be the same individual, suggesting that the two pieces were close enough in date to have been made within one person's life time.<sup>115</sup> Not only are features such as the lotus petals upon which the Gaṇeśas sit clearly similar, with their double-outlined forms and the use of both up-turned and down-turned petals, but the treatment of the rim of the back-slabs is almost identical, having both an inner twisted garland and an outer incised design making up the flames. In addition, the ornamentation of the two figures of Gaṇeśa are rather similar. In spite of these similarities, however, it is not surprising that the two images have nearly half a century difference in date.<sup>116</sup> The example from the reign of Mahīpāla I, dating from approximately the late 10th century, has a more elongated, narrow stele compared to that of the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa, and is slightly more elaborate in conception, in-

<sup>112</sup> Cunningham, ASR, I, pl. XIII; also see idem, ASR, III, p. 120.

<sup>113</sup> See the Appendix, no. 25; also, Cunningham, ASR, III, p. 120; Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 188, 192; Chakravarti, "Pāla Inscriptions," pp. 105-6. See also French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, "List of Dated Pieces," no. 7; EISMS, p. 22; Bloch, *Supplementary Catalogue*, pp. 87-88; Kramrisch, "Pāla and Sena Sculpture," fig. 18.

<sup>114</sup> See the Appendix, no. 26; also, Nirad Bandhu Sanyal, "Mandhuk Inscribed Gaṇeśa of the Reign of Gopāla II," *Varendra Research Society's Monographs* (Rajshahi) no. 8 (1950):4-6. See also M. Harunur Rashid, "Pāla Rule in South-East Bengal," *JVRM* III (1974):28-39.

<sup>115</sup> See my remarks in the Appendix, nos. 26 and 30.

<sup>116</sup> Dinesh Chandra Sircar assigns the paleography of the Mandhuk image to the 10th century. See his "Pāla Rule in the Tippera District," *IHQ* XXVIII, 1 (1952):56.

cluding extra features such as the row of foliation beneath the lotus pedestal upon which Gaṇeśa sits. Thus, the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa clearly seems to anticipate the developments to come later in the same century, and in the following century as well. It would be easy, in fact, I believe, to confuse this piece for one of Mahīpāla I's reign were it not for the inscription.

In addition to the two pieces dated in the year one of Gopāla's reign, another document is the pedestal of a broken image which was found at Bodh Gayā (Fig. 51). Its inscription indicates that it was dedicated in the reign of Gopāla although does not specify which of the Gopālas is meant.<sup>117</sup> Because of its dissimilarity to sculpted pedestals dating as late as the reign of Gopāla III,<sup>118</sup> as well as its lack of relationship to works of the reigns of the early Pāla kings and thus by inference to Gopāla I, it may be dated to the reign of Gopāla II. The pedestal in question lacks the plasticity and deeply carved surfaces which become most noticeable only after the reign of Vigrahapāla III in the mid-11th century. Instead, the low relief carving of the lotus petals as well as the representation of offerings are better related to the depictions of the pedestal details of figures like the Itkhauri Tārā, for example.

## VIGRAHAPĀLA II (ca. third quarter of the 10th century)

As in the case of the three Gopālas, the monuments dated in the reigns of the three rulers named Vigrahapāla present chronological problems which may be solved only by stylistic or paleographic analysis at the present time. Majumdar assigns the Kurkihār images inscribed with the name of Vigrahapāla to the reign of Vigrahapāla II,<sup>119</sup> but for reasons outlined at the appropriate place below, I have assigned them to the reign of Vigrahapāla III. The only sculpture which may be of this king's reign is a representation of Gaurī with Sadyojāta Śiva from Mahāsthāngaṛh which has been noted by Haque but which I have not seen and therefore cannot assess in terms of its place among the dated sculptures of the Pāla period.<sup>120</sup>

## MAHĪPĀLA I (ca. last quarter of the 10th and first quarter of the 11th century)

All of the sculptures known which are inscribed with the name of Mahīpāla may be assigned to the reign of Mahīpāla I. Since the second ruler with the name Mahīpāla ruled for only a few years and was a generally ineffective monarch, it is highly unlikely that his reign should be credited with the many surviving works of "Mahīpāla's" reign. Assuming that he ruled no more than five years, the only two objects which could possibly belong to his reign are the Viṣṇu from Bāghaurā (Fig. 52) and the Nārāyaṇpur Gaṇeśa (Fig. 53), which are dated in regnal years less than five.<sup>121</sup> Mahīpāla I was a strong monarch, often

<sup>117</sup> See the Appendix, no. 27.

<sup>118</sup> For example, Fig. 77.

<sup>119</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:174; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. xxxi.

<sup>120</sup> See the Appendix, no. 28.

<sup>121</sup> This view is disputed by some scholars, as summed up by Chowdhury (*Dynastic History*, p. 75), when he says that "there is no valid ground to establish that Mahīpāla mentioned in the Bāghaurā and Nārāyaṇpur inscriptions was Mahīpāla I, and there is no inherent improbability in the identification of Mahīpāla of these two inscriptions with Mahīpāla II." See also Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, "New Light on the History of Bengal," *JAS* VII, 1-2 (1965):5, n. 4. This view is reiterated by Rashid, ("Pāla Rule," pp. 44-47). In spite of this, I do not subscribe to that view, in light of the stylistic homogeneity of the sculptures which I believe belong



credited with reviving the Pāla empire and creating what has been called the "second" Pāla empire after the Pratihāra interregnum and subsequent weakness of the dynasty.<sup>122</sup> His capital city is believed to be located at Mahīpāl in the Murshidabad District of Bengal, where numerous stone sculptures of the Pāla period have been discovered.<sup>123</sup>

An image of Viṣṇu was discovered at Bāghāurā in the Comilla (formerly Tippera) District of Bengal but was in worship at nearby Vidyakūṭa at the time Bhattasali and French each made note of it (Fig. 52).<sup>124</sup> The present location of the image is not known. The inscription on this sculpture states that the image was dedicated on the 27th day of Māgha in the 3rd regnal year of Mahīpāladeva<sup>125</sup> by a worshipper of Viṣṇu, the merchant Lokadatta, the son of Vasudatta from the village of Bilakinda.<sup>126</sup> It also mentions that the image represents the Nārāyaṇa form of Viṣṇu, although the order of the attributes held in the hands of this deity indicate that it is Trivikrama.<sup>127</sup> It is not known whether this is simply due to an error or to an unknown meaning for the normal Vaiṣṇava terminology.

The style of this image continues the tradition seen in the Itkhauri Tārā and the two pieces dated in the year one of Gopāla II's reign, that is, the Vāgīśvarī and the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa (Figs. 40, 49 and 50). In each of these examples, the stele is somewhat elongated, as if to accommodate the height of the central figure, and is differentiated from the low, round stelae reiterating the short, squat figure style of the Śūrapāla I sculptures and those of the Mahendrapāla period following that trend. Here, the halo is elongated and the detailing very fine. The elements of the background, including the *vyālakas* and cross-bars, are still rather flat compared to the styles of the late 11th and 12th centuries. The *vidyādhara*s at the top of the stele are by this time standard elements of Pāla iconography and appear in Buddhist and Brahmanical icons alike. The entire format, in fact, may be considered "typical" of the Pāla period, consisting of the following elements: large central figure, attended by usually two or four smaller figures, lotus pedestal for the central figure and sometimes for the attendants, figures of donors or lay worshippers and perhaps offerings depicted on the lower portion of the pedestal, garland-bearing *vidyādhara*s above, halo

to the reign of Mahīpāla I, not that of Mahīpāla II. Basically, I feel that the style of the "Mahīpāla" pieces more closely relates to objects like the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa from the reign of Gopāla (II) (Fig. 50) than to works like the Tārā from the reign of Rāmapāla (Fig. 74), therefore suggesting that they are earlier, i.e., belonging to the reign of Mahīpāla I, rather than later, i.e., belonging to the reign of Mahīpāla II. The authors who oppose assigning the works dated in the reign of Mahīpāla to Mahīpāla I on the basis that there is no internal evidence in favor of one or the other Mahīpāla must also admit that *either* of the two Mahīpālas is possible if one judges from the contents of the inscriptions alone; however, as mentioned above, I feel that Mahīpāla I is more likely on the basis of style.

<sup>122</sup> Recently, the extent of credit accorded to Mahīpāla I for reviving the empire has been questioned, and more emphasis has been given to Gopāla II for restoring Pāla lands. See Rashid, "Pāla Rule," pp. 41-42. Similar suggestions have also been made by Dinesh Chandra Sircar in many of his writings.

<sup>123</sup> Sudhir Ranjan Das, *Archaeological Discoveries from Murshidābād District (West Bengal)*, The Asiatic Society Monograph Series, XIX (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1971).

<sup>124</sup> Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions," pp. 353-55; idem, *Iconography*, p. 84; French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, pl. XXVII.

<sup>125</sup> There has been some discussion that the Mahīpāladeva of this inscription (and that of the Nārāyaṇpur Gaṇeśa inscription, below) might refer to Mahīpāla, the Pratihāra, or, alternatively, to a little-known king of another Bengal dynasty. However, there is little evidence to support this idea. See Rashid, "Pāla Rule," pp. 40-41; also Hem Chandra Ray, "Baghaura Nārāyaṇa Image Inscription of Mahīpāla," *IHQ* XVI,3 (1940): 631-38.

<sup>126</sup> See the Appendix, no. 29; also, Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions," pp. 353-55.

<sup>127</sup> T. A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, (Madras: Law Printing House, 1914-16; reprint ed., 2 vols. in 4, New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1968), vol. I, pt. I, p. 229.

behind the head of the main figure (generally defined by the garlands along its perimeter) and some type of architectural structure, generally a throne back, with *vyālakas*, *hamsas*, *makaras* and the like. All of this is contained within a strictly defined format. It is mainly in the details of carving that geographical and chronological differences become evident.

An image of Gaṇeśa presently in the Dacca Museum may be dated to the 4th year of the reign of Mahīpāla I on the basis of its inscription (Fig. 53).<sup>128</sup> This sculpture was found at Rājbari in the Faridpur District of Bengal by Dr. Enamul Haque, Director of the Dacca Museum, in 1967. It was later identified by him as the same image noticed but not illustrated by D.C. Sircar as being from Nārāyaṇpur in the Comilla (formerly Tippera) District of Bengal, some 150 kilometers from Rājbari.<sup>129</sup> The stylistic characteristics of the sculpture are immediately reminiscent of the Bengal Viṣṇu from Bāghāurā, also dated in the reign of Mahīpāla,<sup>130</sup> and interestingly, their inscriptions reveal that both were given by individuals from a place called Bilakindaka. Most striking are the similarly shaped halos with nearly identical detailing of the rims, the overall shapes of the stelae slabs, the treatment of the *vidyādhara*s bearing garlands and the depiction of the worshippers shown on the pedestals. Both works are very carefully carved and show delicate incision in the details of the drapery, jewelry and facial features. In both cases, long locks of hair fall over the shoulders of the central deities.

Chronologically, the next dated sculpture of Mahīpāla's reign is an image depicting the eight major life scenes of the Buddha, with the Māravijaya being the central subject (Fig. 54). The piece, noted by both French and Banerji in worship at Bodh Gayā, is dated in the 10th or 11th year of Mahīpāla.<sup>131</sup> A drawing of it was published by Martin,<sup>132</sup> and recently, it has been located in worship at Bodh Gayā.<sup>133</sup> Its style falls completely in step with the developments of the late 10th or early 11th century as seen in the very carefully placed elements of the composition, the slight point to the top of the stele and especially the treatment of the Buddha's body with its taut, sleek appearance that contrasts to the more full, fleshy forms of an earlier date. The treatment of the lotus petals of the Buddha's seat is slightly unusual in that the upper row is much higher than the lower row; however, the treatment of the individual petals, with their double outlined forms and shaped centers, compares favorably with others from this approximate period (Figs. 50, 52, 53).

<sup>128</sup> See the Appendix, no. 30.

<sup>129</sup> Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Nārāyaṇpur Vināyaka Image Inscription of King Mahīpāla, Regnal Year 4," *Ind. Cult.* IX (1942-43):121-25. I am grateful to Dr. Enamul Haque for clarifying the history of this sculpture for me. See his editorial note to my article, Susan L. Huntington, "Some Aspects of Bengal Stone Sculpture," *BLK* I, 1 (Jan. 1975): 21-22. For further discussion of this sculpture, see Tapo Nath Chakravarti, "The Nārāyaṇpur Image of Vināyaka," *IHQ* XXXII, 2-3 (1956):324-28.

<sup>130</sup> No scholar has doubted that the Bāghāurā and Nārāyaṇpur images belong to the reign of the same monarch, although the debate is still open as to whether that king was Mahīpāla I or Mahīpāla II. See n. 121 above.

<sup>131</sup> See the Appendix, no. 31; also, Cunningham, ASR, III, p. 122; R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 75; rpt. p. 35. Cunningham (ASR, III, p. 122) and French (*Art of the Pāl Empire*, "List of Dated Pieces," no. 8) refer to the 10th year, although Banerji (*EISMS*, pp. 22-23) refers to the 11th. Cunningham's reading of the year *daśame*, with a damaged or unreadable section preceding it, is read by Banerji as *ekādaśame*, hence the difference in the two years given.

<sup>132</sup> Montgomery Martin, ed., *The History, Antiquities, Topography, and Statistics of Eastern India, Comprising the Districts of Behar, Shahabad, Bhagulpur, Goruckpur, Dinajepoor, Puraniya, Rungpoor, and Assam*, 3 vols. (London: William H. Allen & Co., 1836-38; reprint ed. in 5 vols., Delhi, 1976), I (1836), pl. X, fig. 6. Cunningham mistakenly refers to Buchanan [Buchanan-Hamilton], not Martin (ASR, III, p. 122), in his discussion of the piece.

<sup>133</sup> I am grateful to Janice L. Dundon for pointing out the identity of the piece to me.



A sculptured door frame found at the temple of Bālāditya at Nālandā bears an inscription recording the restoration of this temple by Bālāditya, an inhabitant of Telāḍhaka, in the 11th year of the reign of Mahīpāladeva.<sup>134</sup> Pieces of the door-frame as well as a reconstruction drawing of it were published by Broadley<sup>135</sup> while Banerji illustrated a single inscribed portion of it,<sup>136</sup> the latter of which is reproduced here (Fig. 55), along with three other sections of the door jambs (Figs. 56 and 57). This monumental door frame must have been a most impressive structure when assembled, judging from size and complexity alone. Although the various sections show some wear and damage, they also reveal animated, lively carving. The figures, while not directly comparable to most of the images under discussion because they are attendants, not main icons, seem to fit into the stylistic continuum of Pāla art as manifested during the reign of Mahīpāla (I). That is, they are not as short and squat in proportion as early Pāla period figures, nor are they as attenuated and accentuated in pose as later Pāla period ones. They are comparable in proportion, for example, to the Bāghāurā Viṣṇu (Fig. 52) of Mahīpāla's reign. The foliate motifs above the heads of the figures in Fig. 57 are especially interesting since they anticipate the deep carving and richness to be seen later in works like the Naulāgarh pedestal of Vighrahapāla III (Fig. 73).

A crucial sculpture from the reign of Mahīpāla is the pedestal of a seated Buddha image found at Sārnāth<sup>137</sup> (Fig. 58). Because the inscription mentions Mahīpāla and is dated in [Vikrama] *Samvat* 1083, it can be converted to the specific date of 1026 A.D. The inscription does not specify that it is dated in the Vikrama era; however, a date in Śaka would give an equivalent of 1161, which does not correspond to either the reign of Mahīpāla I, or that of Mahīpāla II, and thus cannot be correct. Of course, none of the regnal eras of the Pālas are counted as high as 1083 years, and thus, the era must certainly be Vikrama. The inscription records a rather large building and refurbishing project initiated by Mahīpāla I at Sārnāth around the end of the first quarter of the 11th century.<sup>138</sup> Since the piece is only a fragment, it is difficult to assess its place in the development of Pāla period art; its main importance lies largely in the specificity of the date of its inscription and thus its importance to Pāla chronology.<sup>139</sup>

Another sculpture, presently in the Patna Museum, was noticed and collected by Broadley, who published the piece as being from Tetrāwān<sup>140</sup> and read the inscription as containing the name Mahīpāla<sup>141</sup> (Fig. 59). This most unusual image depicts a *nāga* group

<sup>134</sup> See the Appendix, no. 32; also, Bloch *Supplementary Catalogue*, p. 72; *EISMS*, p. 23, pl. VIa; French, *Art of the Pāl Empire*, "List of Dated Pieces," no. 9; R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 75; rpt. p. 35; Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, p. 209.

<sup>135</sup> Alexander Meyrick Broadley, *Photographs of the Buddhist Sculptures Discovered in Bihar (Zillah Patna)* (Calcutta, 1872), pls. VI, X, XIII.

<sup>136</sup> *EISMS*, pl. VIa.

<sup>137</sup> See pp. 30 and 36 above.

<sup>138</sup> See the Appendix, no. 33; also, Hultsch, "Sarnath Inscription," pp. 139-40; Sahni, *Catalogue*, pp. 88-89; Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, p. 65; Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 220-21.

<sup>139</sup> However, I believe that there are sculptures found at Sārnāth which may be related to Mahīpāla's period of activity at the site. See Huntington, *Origin and Development*, pp. 100-102, figs. 75-77. These images show strong ties to other works from the reign of Mahīpāla I and may be products of his refurbishing. Sahni has hypothesized that the three images were "carved by a sculptor of Gayā at Sārnāth" (*Catalogue*, p. 90). See also his entries B(c)2, B(d)8, B(c)35.

<sup>140</sup> Broadley, *Photographs*, pl. IV.

<sup>141</sup> Broadley, "Buddhistic Remains," p. 281.

and is unlike any other sculpture I have seen from Bihar or Bengal. In spite of Broadley's publication of the piece, both its provenance and its inscription are not without problems. The records of the Patna Museum state that the sculpture is from Ghorakatore, Rājgir, Patna District, not Tetrāwān, which, however, is also in the Patna District. In addition, the Patna Museum reading of the inscription does not include the name Mahīpāla, although admittedly, the Patna Museum translator was able to interpret rather little of the whole epigraph.<sup>142</sup> On a stylistic basis, however, the sculpture does fall in step with images of the late 10th or early 11th century, that is, the time of Mahīpāla I; it is not likely that the piece belongs to the reign of Mahīpāla II since the sculpture bears greater resemblance to earlier pieces than to later ones. Appropriate characteristics include the full and round figures, reminiscent, for example, of the Vāgīśvarī from the reign of Gopāla II (Fig. 49). The head-dresses of the *nāgas* are also similar to that of Vāgīśvarī, and in both sculptures the stele tops are rounded more than sharply pointed as will occur in later images. Resemblance of the *nāga* piece to the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa, also of the reign of Gopāla II (Fig. 50) can be seen in the alternating pattern of the arrangement of the lotus petals of the top and bottom row and in the double-outlined petals. Similarly, the *nāga* group may be said to compare favorably with the Bāghāurā Viṣṇu from the early part of the reign of Mahīpāla (I) (Fig. 52) in the treatment of the lotus petals, the proportions of the figures and the rounded stele tops. My estimate would be that if the sculpture belongs to the reign of Mahīpāla I, it dates from the early part of his reign and thus to the last quarter of the 10th century. However, until the successful and complete decipherment of the inscription is accomplished, it cannot even be stated for certain that it belongs among the dated pieces of Mahīpāla's reign.<sup>143</sup>

Cunningham mentions an inscription reading "Mahīpāladeva" on a colossal statue of an ascetic Buddha found at Tetrāwān in Bihar.<sup>144</sup> Patil does not include this figure in his discussion of the inscriptions found at Tetrāwān and the present location of the Buddha is unknown. I have not been able to locate photographs of it thus far and it is not possible at present to decide what might be the importance of this sculpture to Pāla art and chronology.

A metal image of Viṣṇu from Nimdighi, Rajshahi District, bears an inscription which has been read as containing the date of the year 23 of Mahīpāla's reign (Fig. 60).<sup>145</sup> Since Mahīpāla II is believed to have had a very short reign of less than five years, it is unlikely that this piece could belong to his reign (assuming the reading of the inscription is correct). The sculpture bears most striking resemblance to dated examples from the reign of Vighrahapāla (III), particularly the three Buddha images from Kurkihār (Figs. 69, 70, 71) in the flattened and very regular flames around the *prabhāmaṇḍala*. Although many of the details of the casting are not clear due to the fact that the piece has not yet been cleaned, it is evident that the same sleekness and refinement to be seen in the Vighrahapāla

<sup>142</sup> P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 75-76. See the Appendix, no. 34. From the photographs I was able to supply him, D. C. Sircar was unable to find the name Mahīpāla in the inscription (letter to me dated 12 February 1981). I have chosen to include the piece, however, until the epigraph can be studied thoroughly. Sircar assigns the paleography to the 10th century.

<sup>143</sup> I am grateful to Janice L. Dundon for locating the sculpture in the Patna Museum.

<sup>144</sup> Cunningham, *ASR*, I, p. 39; idem, *ASR*, III, p. 123. See the Appendix, no. 35.

<sup>145</sup> See the Appendix, no. 36. I am grateful to Dr. Enamul Haque, Director of the Dacca Museum, for sharing his reading of the inscription with me, for providing a photograph of the image, and for allowing me to publish the piece.

period images of a few decades later existed in metal work of the reign of Mahīpāla I. Pointing ahead to the typical features of late Pāla period works, the pedestal of the image is *pañcaratha* in plan, the lotus petals are double outlined and have both down-turned and up-turned petals, and the figure of Viṣṇu is relatively small in relation to the size of the *prabhāmaṇḍala*. Further, Viṣṇu's head-dress is high and pointed and his consorts stand in accentuated postures. In many respects, and compared to other examples from the reign of Mahīpāla I, the piece seems extraordinarily advanced in style.

An image of Cuṇḍā from Kurkihār bears a date of the year 31 (or 21) of Mahīpāladeva (Fig. 61) and besides giving this information, the inscription states that the image was the gift of the son of the goldsmith Keśava.<sup>146</sup> Stylistically, the sculpture, which dates from the first quarter of the 11th century, is quite dissimilar from the Kurkihār metal images dated in the reign of Rājyapāla (Figs. 44-48) as it lacks both the ornateness as well the heavy use of incised decoration seen in the earlier examples. A most noticeable difference is the increased size of the facial features of the figure from Mahīpāla's reign. Since this image bears similarities to the Imādpur images to be discussed below dated in the 48th year of Mahīpāla's reign (Figs. 62 and 63), which in turn seem related to the earlier examples from Kurkihār, this difference of style may be attributed to a difference in craftsmanship rather than a stylistic change of direction.

Although at least nine metal sculptures had been found in the village of Imādpur, north of the Ganges River in the Muzaffarpur District of Bihar, their whereabouts had been a mystery until C.C. Das Gupta accidentally rediscovered two of them in the 1940s at the British Museum, a representation of Balarāma, Ekānamśā (Subhadrā) and Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva<sup>147</sup> (Fig. 62) and one of Gaṇeśa, Brahmāṇī, Kumārī, Vaiṣṇavī and Kubera (Fig. 63).<sup>148</sup> The other seven images are still missing. The rediscovery of these sculptures was very important since, along with one of the missing images, they contain inscriptions with dates in the reign of Mahīpāla. The date of 48th regnal year of Mahīpāla was first read by Cunningham in the 19th century<sup>149</sup> and was also noticed by Hoernle.<sup>150</sup> Later, however, R.C. Majumdar offered an alternative reading of the date inscribed on these two images. He suggested that the inscriptions should be read as the year 148, referring to the Nepal era, which began in 880 A.D., thus designating the date of these images to the equivalent

<sup>146</sup> See the Appendix, no. 37; also, P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 149; Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, "Some Dates in the Pāla and Sena Records," *JRASBL* VII (1941):218, n. 1. See also Jayaswal, "Metal Images," pl. XXXIV, fig. 2.

<sup>147</sup> This iconographic identification was made by J. N. Banerjea, who corrected the previously held view that the figures depicted Balarāma, Lakṣmī, and Viṣṇu. See his appendix in Ramesh Chandra Majumdar and Jitendra Nath Banerjea, "Two Inscribed Images of Imadpur," *JRASBL* XVI, 2 (1950):249-51.

<sup>148</sup> Charu Chandra Das Gupta, "Two Unpublished Dated Pāla Bronzes in the British Museum," *PIHC* X, Bombay, 1947, (pub. Allahabad, 1949):245-248.

<sup>149</sup> Alexander Cunningham and H. B. W. Garrick, *Report of Tours in North and South Bihar in 1880-81*, ASR, XVI (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1883; reprint ed., Delhi and Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1969), pp. 84-88, especially n. 1 on p. 88. See also the Appendix, nos. 38-39. The Cunningham report also verifies the find-spot of the pieces as Imādpur. The British Museum records state that the pieces were sold to the museum by Mr. J. E. Phipps Lincke although no find-spot is mentioned. Lincke's own account of his finds at the site does not include mention of the pieces. (See J.E. Phipps Lincke, "An Account of the Excavations of a Mound Called Jowhri Di, near the Village of Imadpur, in the Muzafferpore District," *ASB, Proc.*, 1881, p. 98.) Lincke's account is an abstract, not a full report, and this may explain the fact that the pieces are not mentioned. Since Cunningham's account is based on Lincke's report to him, there is little reason to doubt the provenance of the sculptures as Imādpur.

<sup>150</sup> A. F. Rudolf Hoernle, "The Palas of Bengal," *Ind. Ant.* XIV (1885):165, n. 17. Also see the Appendix, nos. 38-39.

of 1028 A.D.<sup>151</sup> Since we have already seen that the Sārnāth pedestal dated to the equivalent of 1026 A.D. falls within the reign of Mahīpāla, it would indeed be possible that even a reading in the Nepal era permits the bronzes to be dated in the period of this king. Other authors, however, disputed Majumdar's contention,<sup>152</sup> and later Majumdar himself apparently withdrew his view.<sup>153</sup> In either case, the actual date of the two sculptures would not be significantly different since both the regnal year 48 and the Nepal era date of 148 (1023 A.D.) would fall near the end of Mahīpāla's reign around the third or fourth decade of the 11th century. However, the year 48 is clearly the preferable reading. It has been mentioned above that the two Imādpur sculptures relate better to the Kurkihār images of Rājyapāla's reign than to the Cuṇḍā bronze from only a few years before in the reign of Mahīpāla. The similarities may be seen in the angular features of the faces, the high conical head-dresses, the proportions of the bodies, and in the case of the two Vasudhārās from the reign of Rājyapāla compared to the seated deities in Fig. 63, the similar postures of the figures. It becomes apparent that the stylistic modes of the figures found in the Kurkihār hoard had a wide currency throughout Bihar, and evidence of this will also be found in metal images from Bengal.<sup>154</sup>

#### THE CANDRA DYNASTY: THREE DATED SCULPTURES

The development of sculpture created under the Pāla monarchs has already been interrupted to accommodate the images dated in the reign of Mahendrapāla, the Pratihāra. It is necessary again to interject a few sculptures dated in the reigns of non-Pāla rulers in order to maintain a chronological sequence and further clarify the developments of sculptural styles in Bihar and Bengal from the 8th-12th centuries.

Until very recently, very little was known about a dynasty called the Candras who ruled

<sup>151</sup> R. C. Majumdar and J. N. Banerjea, "Two Inscribed Images," p. 248.

<sup>152</sup> For example, Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Date of the Imādpur Image Inscriptions of Mahīpāla I," *IHQ* XXX, 4 (1954):382-87.

<sup>153</sup> In his *History of Ancient Bengal*, Majumdar omits references to the 148 reading and instead gives the date of year 48 for the Imādpur pieces (pp. xxxii and 184, n. 156). The year 148 reading has been included in the Appendix, nos. 38-39, in this volume for completeness in providing the range of interpretations of the various inscriptions. For further discussion of this point, see B.P. Sinha, *Dynastic History*, p. 209, n. 150.

<sup>154</sup> Although uninscribed, two other sculptures may shed light on the imagery of the reign of Mahīpāla I. The first is a metal representation of Śiva as Natarāja in worship at the temple of Amṛtaghaṭeśvara at Melakkaḍambūr in Tanjavur District in south India. The sculpture is reputed to have been brought to the south by Rājendra Coḷa after his campaign against Mahīpāla I in Bengal. If the traditional history of the image is true, then it would have to have been in existence by 1024, the latest date usually given for Rājendra's invasion. That it may have been a product of Mahīpāla's reign is suggested by its resemblance to the image of Viṣṇu dated in the year 23 of Mahīpāla's reign, now in the Dacca Museum (Fig. 60). For illustrations of the Natarāja, see C. Sivaramamurti, *Nataraja in Art, Thought and Literature* (New Delhi: National Museum, 1974), figs. 179 and 181 and p. 304. The second sculpture is a stone representation of Gaṇeśa presently in worship at the Nāgēśvara temple at Kumbakonam in south India. Popularly called "Gaṇaikoṇḍa Vināyaka," the name alludes to the view held by temple authorities that this work was also brought back to south India by Rājendra Coḷa from Bengal. Mr. N. Sethuraman of Kumbakonam has kindly supplied me with photographs of this image; in addition, it has been published by S. K. Govindaswami, "A Note on a Pāla Image of Ganapati at Kumbakonam," *JIH* XIII-XIV (1934-35):304-11. Unfortunately, the sculpture does not correspond closely to any of the known dated images from Mahīpāla's reign; in fact, it more resembles sculptures from Orissa than those from Bengal. The treatment of the lotus petals, the lobed arch behind the head of the main figure, and other details lead me to believe that, while this may indeed be an image brought south by Rājendra Coḷa, the original home of the work may have been Orissa, not Bengal. For an illustration, see the sketch provided by Govindaswami. Also see n. 163 below.

portions of Bengal (especially the southeast) from the 9th century or earlier to the middle of the 11th century, concurrently with the more dominant Pālas. Tāranātha refers to a dynasty of kings whose names end in the suffix *-candra* although he believed they reigned prior to the Pāla period.<sup>155</sup> Their existence has recently been corroborated by inscriptional evidence and the genealogy of the lineage is now known from three copper-plates from Maināmatī, one from Dacca and one from Paschimbhag.<sup>156</sup> Table IX provides the known genealogy and suggested chronology for the Candras.

Table IX  
Candra Genealogy and Chronology

King	Known reign length	Dates (Chowdhury) <sup>157</sup>	Dates (Majumdar) <sup>158</sup>
Pūrṇacandra*	-	?	?
Suvarṇacandra	-	?	?
Trailokyacandra	-	c. 900-930	c. 875-905
Śricandra	44** or 46	c. 930-975	c. 905-955
Kalyāṇacandra	24	c. 975-1000	c. 955-985
Laḍahacandra	18	c. 1000-1020	c. 985-1010
Govindacandra	23	c. 1020-1045	c. 1010-1035

\* Pūrṇacandra and Suvarṇacandra do not have imperial titles in the inscriptions thus far discovered. They may have been petty local rulers or feudatories. Trailokyacandra was apparently the first king.

\*\* D.C. Sircar believes the reading of the year 44 is erroneous as stated in a letter to me dated 11th December 1980.

The earliest known sculpture inscribed with the name of a Candra king is in two fragments, the remains of what was once a very large image of Śiva Naṭarāja (Figs. 64 and 65). It was found at a tank at Bhārellā near Baḍkāmtā in the Comilla (formerly Tippera) District of Bengal. The sculpture was complete when it was originally discovered in modern times, but was apparently broken to pieces soon after its discovery.<sup>159</sup> The inscription identifies the central deity as Nartteśvara and states that the image was dedicated in the 18th regnal year of a king named Laḍahacandradeva, by Bhābu (Bhāvu) Deva, the son of Kusuma Deva.<sup>160</sup> Laḍahacandradeva's reign is given a late 10th-early 11th century date by Majumdar<sup>161</sup> but is placed in the first quarter of the 11th century by

<sup>155</sup> Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya, *Tāranātha's History*, pp. 249-56.  
<sup>156</sup> R. C. Majumdar, "New Light," pp. 1-6, especially p. 1 n. 1; Ahmad Hasan Dani, "Mainamati Plates of the Chandras," *PA* 3 (1966):22-55.  
<sup>157</sup> Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, p. 278.  
<sup>158</sup> R. C. Majumdar, "New Light," p. 1.  
<sup>159</sup> Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pp. 114-15. See also Nalini Kanta Bhattasali, "A Note on the Baḍkamta Nartteśvara Image Inscription," *JPASB* XI, 1 (Jan. 1915):17-18.  
<sup>160</sup> See the Appendix, no. 66; also, Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions," pp. 349-52. The name of the king was originally read by Bhattasali, the editor of the inscription, as Layahacandra (reading -ya- for -ḍa-). He corrected his error in the copy of the *Epigraphia Indica* volume held in the library of the Dacca Museum, where he was curator. This information is provided by Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, p. 155, n. 1. The name Laḍahacandra is more clearly read in more recently discovered inscriptional evidence. See also Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pp. 114-15, for further discussion of the piece.  
<sup>161</sup> See Table IX.

Chowdhury,<sup>162</sup> and thus, the image probably was made in the late 10th or early 11th century. The two portions presently preserved reveal crisply carved surfaces reminiscent of the precision seen in the Viṣṇu from Bāghāurā from the 3rd year of Mahīpāla's reign (Fig. 52), and the representations of devotees carved along the lower portion of the pedestal are strikingly similar to the comparable figures in the Nārāyaṇpur Gaṇeśa image (Fig. 53). Together, these features reinforce the historical evidence that Laḍahacandra and Mahīpāla were contemporaries, perhaps ruling separate portions of Bengal simultaneously.

Two sculptures inscribed with the name of Govindacandra were also found in Bengal and further document the artistic styles current in the first half of the 11th century (Figs. 66 and 67). Govindacandra is known to have been ruling at the time Bengal suffered a Coḷa invasion under Rājendra Coḷa, as known from Coḷa accounts.<sup>163</sup>

The figure of Sūrya is from the 12th year of the reign of Govindacandra and was found at Kulkuḍi in the Faridpur District of east Bengal (Fig. 66).<sup>164</sup> In style, it is extremely close to the Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva) dated in the 23rd year of the reign of Govindacandra which was found at Betkā (Pāikpārā) in the Dacca District of east Bengal (Fig. 67).<sup>165</sup> Both images exhibit the characteristics generally ascribed to images of the 11th (as well as the 12th) century in Bengal. The central figures of the stelae, for example, are much smaller in proportion to the rest of the slab than earlier examples. Furthermore, the backgrounds now occupy much more space in which to accommodate the necessary iconographic elements of *vidyādhara*s, halos, attendants and architectural constructs, again in comparison to earlier examples. The attention to detail in carving the elaborate jewelry, garments and floral motifs may be considered a logical development of the care which had been noted as early as the Itkhauri Tārā from the reign of Mahendrapāla, although pushed to the point where it seems to stifle the freedom of rendering, causing the icons to be stiff and restrained in appearance. In the case of the Viṣṇu image, others with very similar configurations may be found by the dozens from Bengal from this approximate period and it may be surmised that workshops were given to almost factory-like production of quantities of sculptures following the now-codified formulae of both style and iconography.

Typical features of the two sculptures which mark both the progression in time and to some extent the geographic shift from Magadha to Bengal include the high conical head-

<sup>162</sup> See Table IX.  
<sup>163</sup> For a discussion of the Coḷa invasion and the relevant Coḷa records, see Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 80, 185. Chowdhury believes that the invasion took place between 1021 and 1024 A.D. R.C. Majumdar, however, contends that the Coḷa expedition occurred in 1017 A.D. See his "New Light," p. 2, n. 1, and also n. 154 above. In a letter to me dated 11th December, 1980, D.C. Sircar indicated that he believes the invasion took place "about three years before 1025 A.D."  
<sup>164</sup> See the Appendix, no. 67; also, Nalini Kanta Bhattasali, "Two Inscriptions of Govindachandra, King of Vanga: Kulkuḍi Sun-god Image Inscription of the 12th Year of the Reign of Govindachandra and Betkā Vāsudeva Image Inscription of the 23rd Year of Govindachandra," *EI* XXVII (1947-48):24-27, especially 26; Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Epigraphic Notes—Kulkuri and Betkā Inscriptions of Gōvindhachandra," *EI* XXVIII (1949-50):339-40; idem, "A Note on the Bargaṅga Stone Inscription of Bhūti-varman," *Journal of the Assam Research Society* X (1943):63-67.  
<sup>165</sup> See the Appendix, no. 68; also, Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Pāikpārā Vāsudeva Image Inscription of King Govindachandra of Bengal, Regnal Year 23," *Ind. Cult.* VII (1940-41):405-16; Bhattasali, "Two Inscriptions of Govindachandra," p. 26; D. C. Sircar, "Epigraphic Notes: Kulkuri and Betkā Inscriptions," pp. 339-40. Bhattasali (p. 26) notes that the paleography of this epigraph is quite different from that of the Kulkuḍi Sūrya of the year 12 and says that this is proof that paleography can be an unsafe guide to dating. In a letter to me dated 11th December 1980, D.C. Sircar notes that the paleography of this inscription appears to be somewhat later than the mid-11th century.

dresses, the pointed tops of the stelae and the tendency to carve the central figure completely away from the back-slab by actually perforating the stele. Although this feature occurred frequently in metal sculpture before this time simply because of the requirements of the technique to cast pieces separately, it does not appear in stone sculpture until approximately this time. The reason for this practice in stone is not understood but it may ultimately derive from imitation of metal icons, or may be simply a device for setting the main figure apart from the rest of the sculpture.

Even though the overall configurations of the two stelae differ, they are extremely close in style, as may be seen in the facial features (except the eyes) of the two main figures, their nearly identical necklaces, the treatment of their high head-dresses (the differences being mainly iconographic), the flying ribbons issuing from the crowns and the pointed tops of the stelae. Since the attendants of each deity, the elements of the pedestal and those of the back-slab are determined by iconography, it is difficult to compare their stylistic features, but it can be seen that the relative spacing of these elements, the depth of their carving and their relationship to the central figure are quite similar.

DATED IMAGES OF THE PĀLA PERIOD: (ca. second quarter 11th-last quarter 12th century)

NAYAPĀLA (ca. second quarter of the 11th century)

An image of a four-armed seated goddess with a child on her lap, named Puṇḍeśvarī in its inscription, which also gives the date of the 13th year of Nayapāla, was noted at Rājāunā (near Lakhisarai) in the Monghyr District of Bihar.<sup>166</sup> The present whereabouts of the sculpture are unknown to me and, thus, its position in the development of Pāla period art may not be determined at present.

VIGRAHAPĀLA III (ca. third quarter of the 11th century)

There are four metal images presently known which are dated in the reign of Vighrahapāla, almost certainly the third Pāla ruler of that name. One was found at Mandoil in the Rajshahi District of Bengal (Fig. 68) and three were recovered at Kurkihār (Figs. 69, 70, 71). Since the three Kurkihār sculptures have a number of features in common, it is useful to discuss them together, and thus, although the Mandoil piece dated in the year 4 of Vighrahapāla postdates the earliest of the Kurkihār pieces, which is dated in the year 3, it will be discussed first.

Recently, the Varendra Research Museum<sup>167</sup> was fortunate to acquire three metal sculptures from Mandoil.<sup>168</sup> Other images recovered from the site in past years and also housed in the Varendra Research Museum indicate that Mandoil is a place of considerable archaeological interest although it has never been surveyed or excavated. Of the three images, one, a representation of Viṣṇu, bears an inscription revealing that it was dedicated in the 4th year of Vighrahapāla (Fig. 68).<sup>169</sup> The other two pieces are so closely

<sup>166</sup> See the Appendix, no. 40; also, D. C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," p. 138.

<sup>167</sup> In recent years, the name Varendra Research Museum has been used in place of Varendra Research Society in publications and communications.

<sup>168</sup> See S. Siddhanta, "Some Recently Acquired Sculptures in the Varendra Research Museum," *JVRM* III (1974):106-12.

<sup>169</sup> See the Appendix, no. 42; also, Siddhanta, "Some Recently Acquired Sculptures," p. 108; Abdul Momin Chowdhury, "Mandoil Viṣṇu Image Inscription of Vighrahapāla," *JVRM* III (1974):49-51.

related in style and technique that they must not only date from about the same time but are probably also products of the same workshop (Figs. 273, 274).

Some question has arisen as to whether the inscription refers to Vighrahapāla II or Vighrahapāla III (there is no reason on paleographic or stylistic grounds to attribute the work to the reign of Vighrahapāla I). One author, Chowdhury, suggests that it is very difficult to decide which reign the piece belongs to since the two kings ruled together fairly closely in time, although he leans toward a date in the reign of Vighrahapāla II.<sup>170</sup> In my own opinion, stylistic traits are such that a date in the reign of Vighrahapāla III seems most likely. In light of Chowdhury's own equivocation on this issue, the paleographic evidence does not really adversely affect such a view. Except for the lack of height and attenuation in the Mandoil pieces, they are very comparable to the three Kurkihār examples to be discussed below, and considering that they clearly come from two distinct workshops, this difference is not problematic.

The Mandoil Viṣṇu (and its companion pieces as well) is an extremely refined, beautifully cast piece, representative of the finest workmanship of the late Pāla period. Many of the 11th and 12th century metal pieces in fact carry this sleek, crisp appearance, indicating that a high degree of skill had been achieved by craftsmen throughout the Pāla domains. This skill is visible not only in the depiction of the main figure, but in the subsidiary figures and details of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* as well. The flattened forms of the flames around the rim of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* create a linear, two-dimensional design in contrast to the treatment in earlier images and in addition, the very regularized spacing and sizing of the elements further contributes to the effect of a highly organized, well planned-out pattern, rather than exuberant naturalistic forms. Viṣṇu stands frontally and stiff, as is usual in Vaiṣṇava icons of this time, but the *tribhaṅga* postures of Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī add some accent to the configuration, again, as is common in sculptures of this period. The high pedestal of the *pañcaratha* type also is standard at this time, and contrasts to the lower and simpler pedestals of earlier periods. One feature of interest in this piece is the use of silver inlay to accentuate and highlight certain of the forms, such as the jewelry worn by the main god. Such a technique is known at other Pāla period sites, but becomes increasingly common in the later Pāla period, ca. 11th and 12th centuries, and is a practice which was apparently carried from Bihar and Bengal to Nepal and Tibet where it is widely used in Buddhist metal imagery of the post-Pāla period.

Completely in keeping with the Mandoil Viṣṇu are the three sculptures from Kurkihār dated in the reign of Vighrahapāla (Figs. 69, 70, 71). The inscriptions on these three pieces indicate that their stylistic similarity is something more than a coincidence arising from their common provenance and period, for they were all donations by relatives of an individual named "Dūlapa." Fig. 69 was the gift of Tikūka, the son of the Mahāyāna lay worshipper Dūlapa in the year 3 of the reign of Vighrahapāla;<sup>171</sup> Fig. 70 was given by Yekhoḱā, and Fig. 71 by Uṭmarāka, the wife and son respectively of Dūlapa, in the 19th year of the reign of Vighrahapāla.<sup>172</sup> However, in the intervening years since the first

<sup>170</sup> Chowdhury, "Mandoil Viṣṇu Image," pp. 49-51.

<sup>171</sup> See the Appendix, no. 41; also P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 131-32; Jayaswal, "Metal Images," pl. XXXIII, fig. 1.

<sup>172</sup> See the Appendix, nos 43-44; also, Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," pp. 239-40; P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 133.

sculpture was dedicated, Dūlapa's status changed to Mahattama, according to both of the later inscriptions. Even though there are sixteen years difference between the first and last of these sculptures, it would not be easy to prove that a definite stylistic progression had occurred between them. Details of the head-dresses, *prabhāmaṇḍalas* and other features may be due more to different craftsmen than to stylistic change of the school. As has been mentioned before, all three bear a great deal of resemblance to the Viṣṇu from Mandoil also dated in the reign of Vīgrahapāla (III).

As landmarks in the stylistic progression of the Kurkihār school of sculpture, these images are of great interest. The earliest dated Kurkihār metal piece was the Balarāma from the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 31). This sculpture showed a high quality of craftsmanship along with a great degree of iconographic and decorative elaboration. However, the style of the figure was not sleek and mannered, but rather appeared to be of stocky, muscular proportions. The facial features of Balarāma were too worn to surmise their original condition, but it does not appear that they were sharply outlined or rigidly defined.

The two Vasudhārās (Figs. 45 and 46) and the Umā-Maheśvara (Fig. 47) from Rājyapāla's reign showed another documented stage of development at Kurkihār. In these figures, we noted an increased tendency to outline the features of the face and to accentuate the postures of the bodies. These bodies were of more slender stature and decreased fleshiness in the face, making the facial features appear more prominent. In addition, there was much more dependence on line and incision to define the various forms of the sculpture, moving away from the more exuberant, sculpted quality of the Balarāma.

The three metal Buddhas from Vīgrahapāla's reign seem to be the culmination of the tendency to crystallize form by the use of line rather than modelling and to harden the features of the face and body into a very sleek, mannered whole. This tendency may be seen clearly in Fig. 72, a detail of the profile of Fig. 71. The extremely pointed nose is probably the result of the use of metaphor in Pāla art, wherein, for example, the nose might be likened to the beak of a parrot.<sup>173</sup> This characteristic has been noted in the treatment of the human male torso (almost always used for the central image only) as a visual metaphor of the cow's head (*gomukha*). Indeed, in these three sculptures we may see the cow's head torso once again, but taken so literally that it barely resembles the human form ultimately intended. This tendency to abstract the forms of the human body by likening them to other forms (usually natural), may also be seen in the tubular appearance of the legs, patterned after the trunk of the elephant.<sup>174</sup> Together, these features characterize the growing codification of the sculptural forms throughout the Pāla period which culminates in the Bengal representations of the 12th century. This intellectualization of art forms does not necessarily imply a degeneration of style or quality, as may be seen easily in these three examples. However, the misunderstanding of these forms accounts for many of the inferior quality works surviving from the late Pāla period and the Sena period. Taken together, the metal images dated in the reign of Vīgrahapāla III stand among some of the finest of all Pāla sculptures.

<sup>173</sup> One of the only discussions of this subject known to me occurs in the writings on aesthetics of Indian art by Abanindranath Tagore. See his "Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy," fig. 11.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., fig. 16. For *gomukha*, see above, p. 20.

Only one<sup>175</sup> dated stone sculpture may be ascribed to the reign of Vīgrahapāla III (Fig. 73). This broken pedestal may once have belonged to a figure of Vasudhārā, as is suggested from the feminine form of the body as well as the depiction of the right hand in *varadamudrā*, offering a gem or fruit. The pedestal was found at Naulāgarh, in the Monghyr District of Bihar as recently as 1950 and is inscribed with a dedication date of the 24th regnal year of Vīgrahapāla.<sup>176</sup> On paleographic grounds, it has been assigned to the reign of Vīgrahapāla III since the script resembles letter forms of the 11th and 12th centuries.<sup>177</sup> The style of this pedestal reinforces this suggestion since the plasticity of the carving, especially noticeable in the lotus petals and the floriated motifs occurring beneath the lotus seat, differs from the low relief carvings of the 10th century (the time of Vīgrahapāla II) and is totally unlike the remains from the period of Vīgrahapāla I. Instead, its characteristics are much more similar to the developments of the late 11th century to be seen in the sculptures of Rāmapāla's reign (Figs. 74 and 75) such as the deep carving, the rendition of the lotus petals and the overall elaboration.

As has been mentioned before, the styles of metal and stone sculptures are not always the same in any given period. This is especially true in the reign of Vīgrahapāla III, for while the metal images seem to betray an emphasis on linear, flattened forms, such as in the treatment of the *prabhāmaṇḍalas*, stone sculpture seems to have been marked by an exuberance of sculptural, three-dimensional forms.

#### MAHĪPĀLA II (ca. third quarter of the 11th century)

This monarch ruled for a very short time only and there are no sculptures which may be assigned to his reign on the basis of inscription.<sup>178</sup>

#### ŚŪRAPĀLA II (ca. third quarter of the 11th century)

There are no known sculptures which may be securely assigned to the reign of Śūrapāla II. Like his predecessor, Mahīpāla II, Śūrapāla II held the throne for only a brief period of time.

#### RĀMAPĀLA (ca. last quarter of the 11th and first quarter of the 12th century)

The long reign of Rāmapāla lasted more than a half century, as known from a recently discovered manuscript which was copied in the 53rd regnal year of the king.<sup>179</sup> A number of inscriptions of the reign of this monarch have also been noted, although one of them,

<sup>175</sup> The image dated in the year 12 or 13 of Vīgrahapāla (Fig. 37), which is often considered to be of the reign of Vīgrahapāla III, has been dated by me to the reign of Vīgrahapāla I. See p. 47.

<sup>176</sup> See the Appendix, no. 45; also, Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Some Inscriptions from Bihar," *JBRs* XXX-VII, 3-4 (Sept.-Dec. 1951):2-4; Radha Krishna Chaudhary, "Naulagarh Inscription," *GDCBS* 1 (n.d. [1950?]):10-16.

<sup>177</sup> Chaudhary, "Naulagarh Inscription," p. 12.

<sup>178</sup> The debate over the length of Mahīpāla II's reign centers on whether a manuscript dated in the year 5 of Mahīpāla belongs to the reign of Mahīpāla I or II. The manuscript has been published by S.K. Saraswati, *Pāl-juger Chitrakālā*, pp. 42 and 63. See Susir Kumar Mitra, ed., *East Indian Bronzes* (Calcutta: Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, 1979), p. 149; also, p. 55 above.

<sup>179</sup> P. Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions," p. 110, n. 35.



which occurs on the pedestal of a Buddha in a votive *stūpa*, does not bear a date.<sup>180</sup> This latter example, which was found at Uren, Monghyr District, Bihar, has not been located in recent times but was observed *in situ* in 1943-44.<sup>181</sup>

However, a standing image of Tārā dated in the 2nd or 3rd<sup>182</sup> regnal year of Rāmapāla was found at Tetrāwān in the Patna District of Bihar and serves as a standard for late 11th century Pāla sculpture (Fig. 74). When compared to the Itkhauri Tārā from the 8th regnal year of Mahendrapāla, the changes which occurred over the preceding two centuries become apparent. The central figure now stands in an accented *tribhaṅga* posture with angular transitions occurring at the points where the body changes direction. The forms of the body have become exaggerated so that the waist and hips are extremely narrow while the breasts are comparatively large. The stele is no longer rounded at the top but comes to a distinct point so that the upper portion forms a triangle rather than a half circle. The attention to detail seen in some early Pāla sculptures (and distinguishing them from the more roughly carved examples) here is increased and further refined.

A second votive *stūpa*, again with a Buddha image inside, from the reign of Rāmapāla was found at Uren, Monghyr District, Bihar, although in this case, the epigraph bears a date of the 14th regnal year.<sup>183</sup> Like the undated example, the piece was noticed at the site in 1943-44,<sup>184</sup> but its present whereabouts, and thus its importance to the development of art at this period, are unknown.

An image dated in the year 26 of Rāmapāla's reign was recently noted as having been found at Armā in the Monghyr District of Bihar.<sup>185</sup> The inscription is on the pedestal and records a gift of the image by one Sōnikā, wife of the merchant Vāmbha.<sup>186</sup> I have not seen the image and have not been able to obtain a photograph of it and therefore it must be reserved for the future to determine its place in Pāla period art.

However, another sculpture, dated in the year 42 of Rāmapāla's reign, dedicated by a merchant named Sādhu Saharaṇa who was the son of Sādhu Bhadulva, an inhabitant of Rājgir,<sup>187</sup> offers further evidence on the art of this time (Fig. 75). This image of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara was found by R. D. Banerji at Chandimau in the Patna District of Bihar, not far from Rājgir, along with numerous other Buddhist and Brahmanical sculptures of the Pāla period.<sup>188</sup> Banerji suggested that the sculpture represents the

<sup>180</sup> See the Appendix, no. 46.

<sup>181</sup> P. Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions," pp. 110-111.

<sup>182</sup> See the Appendix, no. 47. The image was discovered by A. M. Broadley, who read the name of the king as Rāmapati ("Buddhist Remains," p. 282), and it was later published by Cunningham (ASR, III, p. 124). The inscription was also published by Nilmani Chakravarti ("Pāla Inscriptions," p. 109, pl. VII). R. D. Banerji read the date as the year 2 of Rāmapāla (EISMS, p. 23; *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 93., rpt. p. 53). However, S. N. Chakravarti ("Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390) reads it as the year 3. He is followed by R. C. Majumdar (*History of Bengal*, I: 174; *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. xxxii).

<sup>183</sup> See the Appendix, no. 48.

<sup>184</sup> P. Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions," p. 102.

<sup>185</sup> *Indian Archaeology, a Review*. Report of the Director General of Archaeology in India, 1960-61, p. 44.

<sup>186</sup> See the Appendix, no. 49; also, *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy for 1960-61*, ed. H. K. Narasimhaswamy (Delhi, 1964), p. 17.

<sup>187</sup> See the Appendix, no. 50; also, Cunningham, ASR, IX, p. 169; R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, pp. 93-94; rpt. pp. 53-54; idem, "Four Sculptures from Chandimau," pp. 161-62. A second sculpture (Appendix, no. 73; Fig. 84) may belong to the reign of Rāmapāla, although the inscription does not specify the king.

<sup>188</sup> The original provenance of the sculpture may not have been Chandimau since many of the sculptures found there had been brought from nearby villages, according to R. D. Banerji ("Four Sculptures from Chandimau," p. 161). This is certainly true in the case of the famous so-called "Chandimau" pillars (published by

degeneration of style which he felt declined along with the political power of the Pālas, and noticed this process in features such as the conventionalization of the drapery folds.<sup>189</sup> It has been suggested, in fact, that the art of the later Pālas, and more so of the Senas, is characterized by a sumptuous attention to detail indicative of a growing worldliness and lavishness in the royal court.<sup>190</sup> While it is tempting to draw such conclusions about art based on what is known about the society which produced it, many other factors must be taken into account. For one thing, the patronage and concern of the Pāla rulers was probably not the main impetus for the active production of art during the period. Instead, a very active lay community supported religious establishments and was probably responsible for much of the art production of this time. Growing complexity in the Buddhist and Brahmanical religions no doubt was also reflected in the increased elaboration of form. Furthermore, it should be remembered that the stylistic features of the 11th and 12th centuries did not suddenly come into being at the time of the weakening of Pāla power. Rather, the major stylistic characteristics, such as the growing three-dimensionality of the forms in stone sculpture, increasing accentuation of body postures and facial features as well as elaboration of detail are clearly the result of the previous centuries' developments, regardless of the political fortunes of the individual kings. In addition, these features are tendencies seen in the art of contemporaneous schools in other regions of India, and are, therefore, unlikely to be solely related to Pāla political developments.

#### KUMĀRAPĀLA (ca. third decade of the 12th century)

There are no images which can be ascribed to the reign of this little known monarch on the basis of their inscriptions.

#### GOPĀLA III (ca. second quarter of the 12th century)

There are two sculptures which belong to the reign of Gopāla III on the basis of their style and inscriptions. The first is a representation of Avalokiteśvara which was found at Kiul, near Lakhisarai in the Monghyr District of Bihar (Fig. 76). The inscription it bears is indistinct but has been read to contain the word "Gopāla" which is taken to be a fragment of king Gopāla's full name and titles.<sup>191</sup> The script has been judged on paleographic grounds to be of the 11th or 12th century by Chaudhary, who suggests that the work dates from the reign of Gopāla III.<sup>192</sup> In light of the style of the sculpture, a date in the reign of Gopāla III seems plausible. Later Pāla period features include the pointed top of the stele, the accentuated pose of the Bodhisattva and the double lotus petal of his pedestal.

The other image from Gopāla's reign is a representation of Sadāśiva presently in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, but originally found at Rajibpur, in the Dinajpur District of

Banerji in the same article), which were in fact from Rājāunā (Cunningham, ASR, III, pp. 154-55). This was noted in recent times by Frederick M. Asher (see P. Chandra, "Some Remarks," pp. 60-61, n. 10). I have not included these pillars in this volume for reasons cited previously (p. 9 n. 3).

<sup>189</sup> EISMS, p. 39.

<sup>190</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:545.

<sup>191</sup> See the Appendix, no. 51; also, Radha Krishna Chaudhary, "Lakhisarai Inscription," *GDCBS* 2 (1952):23-25 [volume bears also separate title *Archaeological Records of Begusarai*]. See also Jatindra Mohan Datta, "A Rare Image of Avalokitesvara," *Modern Review* LXXXIX (1951):377.

<sup>192</sup> Chaudhary, "Lakhisarai Inscription," p. 24.



Bengal (Fig. 77). The inscription has been read as the year 14 of Gopāla and has been presumed to refer to Gopāla III since the paleography suggests a late 11th or early 12th century date.<sup>193</sup> Some authors have contended that Gopāla III met with an unnatural death, perhaps even while still an infant, and never really ruled in his turn.<sup>194</sup> Thus, they would imply that it is highly unlikely to find a sculpture or inscription dated to his reign. However, this matter is basically conjectural and has not been taken seriously by most scholars of Pāla history. I am inclined to date this sculpture to the 12th century simply on the basis of style, and would therefore suggest that it belongs to the reign of Gopāla III. It can be noted that the image displays many of the tendencies which earmark later Pāla stone sculptures. These include: greater plasticity of the background elements and growing detachment of the central figure from the back-slab, elaboration of detail and ornamentation along with decrease in size of the central figure in relation to the rest of the stele. This latter feature is not due to the fact that the image is in a seated posture since in earlier examples<sup>195</sup> the central figure, even when seated, often fills more of the available space. An interesting feature of this sculpture is the fact that on the rear of the back-slab, another face and the back of the body have been carved through.<sup>196</sup> This feature is sometimes seen in Pāla period stone sculptures but is rather rare.

#### MADANAPĀLA (1143-44 to 1161-62)

The dates of king Madanapāla's reign are known rather precisely due to the Valgūdar image inscription dated both in the Śāka year 1083 (1161 A.D.) and in Madanapāla's 18th regnal year.<sup>197</sup> Thus, several sculptures with dedications in the reign of this king may be dated fairly precisely.

A stone image of Pārvatī seated on a lotus pedestal with her lion *vāhana* beneath her and Kārttikeya on her lap was found at Bihār Hill and is dated in the 3rd regnal year of Madanapāla, that is, 1146-47 A.D. (Fig. 78).<sup>198</sup> Its stylistic characteristics fall completely in step with the developments just preceding it in time and, briefly, include emphasized

<sup>193</sup> See the Appendix, no. 52. Nani Gopal Majumdar ("Indian Museum, Calcutta," *ASIAR*, 1936-37, p. 130) ascribes the image to the reign of Gopāla III on paleographic grounds. However, R. C. Majumdar (*History of Bengal* I:167, n. 4; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 193, n. 250) feels less positive that the inscription belongs to Gopāla III rather than to Gopāla II. In his list of Pāla inscriptions (*History of Bengal* I:175), he includes this image with the monuments of the reign of Gopāla III, but in *History of Ancient Bengal* (p. xxxiii) refers to both kings. He admits that there are some late letter forms, as seen by N. G. Majumdar, and since these apparently do not occur at the time of Gopāla II, I am accepting the ascription of this sculpture to the reign of Gopāla III.

<sup>194</sup> R. C. Majumdar (*History of Bengal*, I: 167-68; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 156) says, "The single verse in the RC. [*Rāmacaritam*] referring to him (IV. 12), and a verse in the Manahali CP. have led some scholars to conclude that Gopāla III met with an unnatural death even while he was an infant. Mr. R. D. Banerji has even suggested that he was murdered by Madanapāla." However, Majumdar feels that there is no positive support for any of these contentions. The view that Gopāla III died as an infant is convincingly repudiated by D.C. Sircar, "Three Pala Inscriptions," pp. 231-32.

<sup>195</sup> Compare, for example, to Figs. 33, 39, 41, etc.

<sup>196</sup> N. G. Majumdar, "Indian Museum, Calcutta," pl. XXXVb.

<sup>197</sup> See discussions above, p. 30 and below, p. 71 and the Appendix, no. 56.

<sup>198</sup> See the Appendix, no. 53; also, Cunningham, ASR, III, p. 124; Priyatosh Banerjee, "Two Mediaeval Inscriptions," *JASL* XIX, 1 (1953):105-6. Cunningham identified the figure as Śaṣṭhī. R. D. Banerji mistakenly reported that the date was in the 8th regnal year (*Pālas of Bengal*, p. 104; rpt. p. 64) but later noted it correctly (*EISMS*, p. 23, pl. VIb). See also Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 54; D. R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1638. P. L. Gupta's *Patna Museum Catalogue* does not include the date or the translation of the inscription.

three-dimensionality of the forms, accentuation of the posture of the figure and stylization of the forms of the body such as the narrowed waist and large breasts.

Cunningham noted an inscription of the year 19 of the reign of Madanapāla on a pedestal of a Buddhist statue found at Jaynagar, near Lakhisarai, Monghyr District, Bihar.<sup>199</sup> The reading of this inscription was later corrected to the year 14.<sup>200</sup> Unfortunately, however, the pedestal was all that remained of the original image at the time of Cunningham's discovery, and the present whereabouts of the piece, even fragmentary as it was, are unknown and therefore its stylistic features cannot be used in this discussion.

Another broken pedestal creates a similar problem for modern scholars. This piece was found at Nōṅgaḍh in the Monghyr District of Bihar. D.C. Sircar has explained the problem of its date very clearly. He said: "The date is quoted as the year 201 of the Pāla king Madanapāla, who is known to have ruled in c. 1143-1161 A.D. The year of the date apparently refers to some era. But it is difficult to think of any Indian era that would suit the date. It is, however, very probable that the engraver has omitted the figure 1 before 201 through inadvertence and that the year is actually Vikrama 1201."<sup>201</sup> Sircar goes on to say that although most Pāla epigraphs are dated in regnal years, some few are dated in the Vikrama and Śāka eras. Thus, a date of 1144 A.D. (Vikrama 1201) is likely for the work. Unfortunately, a photograph of even the damaged pedestal has not been published and I have been unable to locate the piece. It is possible that some few details may be present to aid in the reconstruction of Pāla period stylistic evolution; however, it has not been done to the present.

One of the only fixed dates of the Pāla period occurs on yet another broken pedestal of an image from Madanapāla's reign. Unfortunately, as in the case of the preceding two examples, this pedestal, from Valgūdar, near Lakhisarai, Monghyr District, Bihar, is also broken and the image has been lost, and thus its importance lies more in its role in establishing Pāla chronology than as a milestone in the reconstruction of the artistic styles. The image was of the god Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu) and was installed on the 11th day of Jyāishṭha in the 18th regnal year of Madanapāla, which is also given as Śāka 1083 (1161 A.D.).<sup>202</sup> The importance of the inscription has already been discussed.<sup>203</sup>

It is ironic that the sculptures dated in the reign of Madanapāla are so damaged, since he is the only king of the Pāla line for whom we have fixed dates at present. Perhaps in the future, other dated pieces from his reign will emerge and we will be able to establish more positive evidence for the sequence of artistic development.

#### GOVINDAPĀLA (ca. 1161-1165)

In spite of the fact that an inscription referring to Govindapāla is also dated in the Vikrama era, there remains considerable debate over the actual years of this king's reign. The famous Gayā inscription, which is associated with an image of Pārvatī (Fig. 79) and a carving of a Śiva *linga*,<sup>204</sup> bears a date of Vikrama era 1232 (1175 A.D.) and also refers to

<sup>199</sup> See the Appendix, no. 54; also, Cunningham, ASR, III p. 125.

<sup>200</sup> R. C. Majumdar, "Some Dates," p. 216.

<sup>201</sup> Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Bihar," *EI* XXXVI (1965-66):41; also, *Indian Archaeology, a Review*, 1960-61, p. 44. See the Appendix, no. 55.

<sup>202</sup> See the Appendix, no. 56; D. C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," p. 145.

<sup>203</sup> See pp. 30 and 70 in this study.

<sup>204</sup> The carving of a *linga* is mentioned by D. C. Sircar, "Three Pala Inscriptions," p. 233.

the year 14 of Govindapāla;<sup>205</sup> however, it is unclear whether this date refers to an actual regnal year of the king, or the 14th year after his reign had begun but was no longer in progress.<sup>206</sup> D.C. Sircar convincingly argues that the 14th year has to have occurred after Govindapāla had left the throne, and thus assigns this king a short reign.<sup>207</sup> Since the date of the carving is fixed by the Vikrama reckoning, the meaning of the year 14 is of more concern to the issues of Pāla chronology than the development of art; in fact, the carving may fall outside (i.e. after) the reign of Govindapāla.

The inscribed slab was found in the compound of the Viṣṇupāda temple at Gayā and is not a votive image in the normal sense. Instead, the carvings seem to be supplemental to the inscription. The figure of Pārvaṭī is rather crude but still seems to follow some of the stylistic patterns, especially the treatment of the drapery, of the late Pāla period. This sculpture is roughly contemporaneous with a figure of Caṇḍī from Dacca (Fig. 82) although the latter is a votive image of the usual format.

#### PALAPĀLA (ca. last quarter of the 12th century)

Scholarly debate on Pāla chronology has questioned whether Palapāla was in fact a member of the imperial line.<sup>208</sup> However, the recent rediscovery in the Victoria and Albert Museum of an image from Jaynagar, near Lakhisarai, in the Monghyr District of Bihar (Fig. 80) and the rereading of its inscription<sup>209</sup> clarifies Palapāla's role in Pāla history to some extent. An eye-copy of the inscription was first published by Cunningham<sup>210</sup> although he neglected to discuss the image at all. Later, the inscription was read by R.D. Banerji<sup>211</sup> who distinguished only the portion of the inscription which mentioned Palapāla as Lord of Gauḍa (Gauḍeśvara), thus implying his imperial ties, and giving the year 35. Other scholars repeated Banerji's reading,<sup>212</sup> although R.C. Majumdar rejected it.<sup>213</sup> D.C. Sircar, the most recent scholar to deal with the inscription, accepts Banerji's reading<sup>214</sup> and thus, tentatively, it can be said that a king named Palapāla (the extent or limit of whose domains is unknown) ruled for at least 35 years. Most likely, his rule came after that of Govindapāla since the securely dated inscriptions of the reign of Madanapāla and Govindapāla indicate that their reigns were contiguous, or certainly, that no king with a reign of 35 years came between them. It is possible that Palapāla's reign overlapped that of Govindapāla, the two perhaps ruling in different regions.

In the inscription, the goddess depicted is called Pūrṇeśvarī (or Puṇyeśvarī). That it is a Buddhist subject is clearly implied in the inscription which offers the merit gained through the dedication of the image to the *siddhas* and *śramaṇas*, along with the relatives of the donor Ūtakva. The identification of Pūrṇeśvarī and her role in Buddhism, however, remain to

be studied. Further, the inscription states that the image was installed at Campā, now usually identified with Bhāgalpur town, some distance from its findspot of Jaynagar, but still within the ancient region of Aṅga.

The image clearly falls within the parameters of the late 12th century style in Bihar and Bengal in details such as the pointed stele, the highly decorated *kīrttimukha* and slab edge, as well as the double lotus pedestal. In addition, the crispness of carving and almost metallic polish to the surface of the stone are typical features of the works from the 12th century.

Another image with an inscription purported to be from the reign of Palapāla, although I have been unable to locate it or obtain much information and a photograph of it, was found at Lai, near Lakhisarai, Monghyr, Bihar.<sup>215</sup> Supposedly, the inscription mentions a chief named Yaśaḥpāla and contains the year 32, "apparently of the regnal year of the chief's overlord, who, there are reasons to believe, was the Pāla king Palapāla."<sup>216</sup> Yaśaḥpāla's relationship to the imperial Pālas is not known although Tāranātha mentions a Yakṣapāla whom he believed was the son of Rāmapāla.<sup>217</sup>

#### THE SENA PERIOD (ca. 1095-ca. 1230)

The period from the 8th-12th centuries in Bihar and Bengal is generally known as the "Pāla-Sena" period, and thus, the Senas have, in modern scholarship, enjoyed a status which at first glance appears equal to that of the Pālas. Recent studies on Bihar and Bengal history,<sup>218</sup> however, have re-evaluated the roles of these two dynasties, as well as other, previously lesser known, dynasties of these regions. While it is clear that the more than four hundred year history of the Pālas, during which they frequently controlled significant portions of Bihar and Bengal, entitles them to distinction among the dynasties of the region, the Senas have a much shorter history—only slightly longer than a century of power—and the regions they ruled were far less substantial. One could, perhaps, as easily accord the Candras the importance which has previously been enjoyed by the Senas, since they apparently had a fairly long reign in Bengal, although their holdings were less substantial than those of the Senas. Thus, it is important to note that the term "Pāla-Sena period" is more a conventional designation than an accurate reflection of the political situation in Bihar and Bengal from the 8th-12th centuries.

The Senas, who ruled concurrently with the last Pāla kings, and finally succeeded them as rulers of Bengal, are believed to have been of Kārṇāṭa origin.<sup>219</sup> Several copper-plate inscriptions and numerous literary sources provide a great deal of information about the family, and scholars are fairly closely agreed upon most matters of Sena chronology (except the issue of the Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat*, which apparently does not refer to the Sena king, Lakṣmaṇasena). Thus, Majumdar offers the chronology seen in Table X while Chowdhury presents that in Table XI.

<sup>215</sup> It is interesting to note the "cluster" of dated pieces from Monghyr dated in the reigns of the last Pāla kings. See the Appendix, nos. 40, 45, 49, 51, 54-56, 58-59.

<sup>216</sup> See the Appendix, no. 58; also, *Indian Archaeology, a Review*, 1953-54, p. 14.

<sup>217</sup> Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya, *Tāranātha's History*, pp. 314-15; see also R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 95; rpt. p. 55.

<sup>218</sup> See especially Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*.

<sup>219</sup> For a discussion of this point, see R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 205-208; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 219-21.

<sup>205</sup> See the Appendix, no. 57.

<sup>206</sup> See the discussion on p. 30 in this study.

<sup>207</sup> D. C. Sircar, "Three Pāla Inscriptions," pp. 233-36.

<sup>208</sup> See pp. 35-36 in this study.

<sup>209</sup> Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Jaynagar Image Inscription of the Year 35," *JBRs* XLI, 2 (June 1955):143-53. See the Appendix, no. 59.

<sup>210</sup> Cunningham, *ASR*, III, pl. XLV, no. 33.

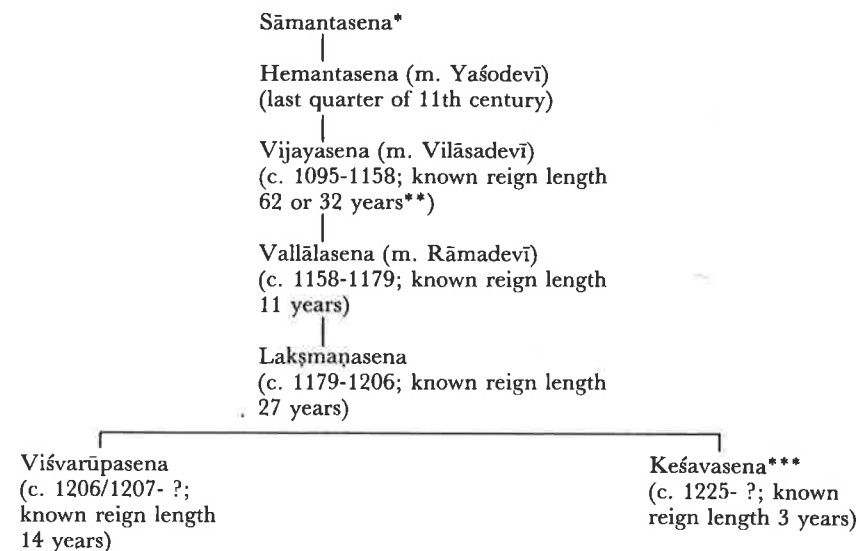
<sup>211</sup> R. D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," p. 496.

<sup>212</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1648.

<sup>213</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:172, n. 1; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 195, n. 264. See pp. 35-36 above.

<sup>214</sup> D. C. Sircar, "Jaynagar Image," pp. 143-53.

Table X

Sena Chronology According to R. C. Majumdar<sup>220</sup>

\* Sāmantasena did not hold royal titles.

\*\* The date in the Barrackpur copper-plate has been variously read as 62 or 32, although 62 is favored by most scholars.<sup>221</sup>

\*\*\* D.C. Sircar believes that "Keśavasena" is an incorrect reading of "Viśvarūpasena." [See Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Madanpārā Plate of Viśvarūpasena," *JASL* XX,2 (1954):209-17. For discussion of this point see Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 261-62.]

It can be seen easily that the two chronological systems offered are virtually identical, save for slight differences (often by only a year or two) in the reign dates for the various kings. The known history of the Sena family begins with Sāmantasena, who held no royal titles. His son, Hemantasena, however, was a ruling chief of Bengal and was given the title Mahārājādhirāja in the Barrackpur copper-plate of his son, Vijayasena.<sup>222</sup>

Properly speaking, Vijayasena was the first king of the line. He greatly increased the Sena holdings during his long reign of more than sixty years.<sup>223</sup> An inscribed pillar with a sculpture of Manasā found at Pāikore in the Birbhum District of Bengal possibly belongs to his reign (Fig. 81). The inscription reads simply "Rajena-sri-Vijayase"<sup>224</sup> and thus it is too vague to prove that it belonged to the reign of the Sena king Vijayasena. Stylistically, however, there is no reason to question a date appropriate to that king, that is, late 11th or 12th century, as can be seen in the accentuated posture of the central figure, the double in-

<sup>220</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 210-233, especially p. 231; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 223-243, especially p. 242.

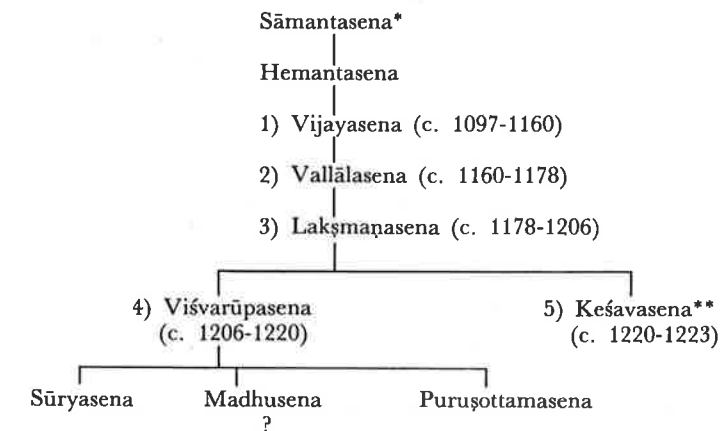
<sup>221</sup> For a discussion and references, see Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, p. 229.

<sup>222</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I: 210; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 223.

<sup>223</sup> See Table X, n. \*\*; also Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, p. 229, regarding the reading of 32 versus 62 in the Barrackpur copper-plate. The year 32 is not usually accepted.

<sup>224</sup> See the Appendix, no. 69; also, *ASIAR*, 1921-22, p. 80. No diacritical marks were provided in the transcription.

Table XI

Sena Chronology According to A.M. Chowdhury<sup>225</sup>

\* Sāmantasena did not hold royal titles.

\*\* D.C. Sircar believes that "Keśavasena" is an incorrect reading of "Viśvarūpasena." [See Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Madanpārā Plate of Viśvarūpasena," *JASL* XX,2 (1954):209-17. For discussion of this point, see Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 261-62.]

cised lotus petals and the overall ornateness of the work. Compared to other carvings of that approximate date though, the workmanship is rather crude.<sup>226</sup>

There are no known dated sculptures from the period of Vallālasena, or, more properly, Ballālasena, son and successor to Vijayasena, but a copper cover, cylindrical in shape and bearing incised decoration, is dated in the year 9 of his reign.<sup>227</sup> Since the decoration does not include figures and is not three-dimensional, I have excluded it from this discussion.<sup>228</sup>

Lakṣmaṇasena is perhaps the best known of the Sena kings, if for no other reason than the fact that his name has been continually discussed in relation to the lengthy scholarly

<sup>225</sup> Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 220, 279.

<sup>226</sup> The Manasā pillar was found in association with a second pillar at Pāikore (Appendix, no. 71; *ASIAR*, 1921-22, pp. 78-80, pl. XXVIIIa). In this case, the image originally crowning the pillar was lost, but the surviving portion shows a great deal of refinement and finesse of carving, with typical 11th-12th-century style ornateness. The design consists of a vase and foliage motif along with small bearded attendants. This pillar bears a much more lengthy inscription than does the Manasā pillar, and it has been translated to read that it records the creation of an image at the order of Karṇa, the Cedi king. It is known that Karṇa invaded Bengal in the 11th century. Karṇa's defeat is recorded in the Siyān stone slab inscription of the time of Nayapāla. See Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Three East Indian Inscriptions of the Early Mediaeval Period [1. Siyān Stone Slab Inscription of the Time of Nayapāla; 2. Bodhgayā Stone Slab Inscription of Buddhasena in the Berlin Museum; 3. Antichak Stone Pillar Inscription of Māsanikeśa]," *JAIH* VI (1972-73):39-47. The black stone material and carving style of the pillar are clearly Bengali in type, and it is likely that the pillar was a local product with little, if any, influence from the Cedi style.

<sup>227</sup> Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Inscriptions from Bihar," *EI* XXX, 3 (1953-54):78-80; idem, "New Facts about the Senas," *IHQ* XXX, 3 (1954): 212.

<sup>228</sup> In the same way, I have excluded the very interesting copper engraving from Sundarban in the Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta, which depicts Viṣṇu and a devotee, and which is dated Śaka 1118 (1196 A.D.). See Benoy Chandra Sen and Devaprasad Ghosh, "A Dated Copper-Plate Grant from Sundarban," *IHQ* X, 2 (1934):321-31; for an illustration, see R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I pl. LXXVIII, fig. 183.

dispute over the origin, meaning and date of the Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat*, often abbreviated simply as La Saṁ. While Pāla chronology offers numerous points of disagreement to scholars, students of Sena history are basically polarized on this one major issue—the significance of the Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat*.<sup>229</sup> One view was set forth by Kielhorn<sup>230</sup> and was supported by other scholars such as R.D. Banerji. It is based on the assumption that the beginning of the Lakṣmaṇasena era was 1119-1120 A.D. and marks the accession of Lakṣmaṇasena to the throne.<sup>231</sup> Another view accepts the date 1119-1120 as a possible beginning for the Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat* but also suggests an alternative date of 1108 A.D.<sup>232</sup> However, the followers of this theory, led by R.C. Majumdar, do not accept this date as celebrating the accession of Lakṣmaṇasena. Because of evidence found in various literary works of the period, this group of scholars feels that Ballālasena, who was Lakṣmaṇasena's predecessor, acceded to the throne around the year Śaka 1081-1082, that is, 1159-60 A.D.,<sup>233</sup> a long time after the agreed upon beginnings of the Lakṣmaṇasena era.

Majumdar further contends that none of the Sena kings, including the sons of Lakṣmaṇasena “even used that era, and that there is no evidence that it was ever known, far less used, in Bengal during the Sena period, or within the next three centuries.”<sup>234</sup> He explains that although “associated with the name of the Sena king Lakṣmaṇasena of Bengal, it was not founded by him; as otherwise it would have been in use also in his home-province of Bengal.”<sup>235</sup> Instead, the Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat* was current in Mithilā (northern Bihar) and was apparently an artificial reckoning, calculated differently in different places, between the dates of 1108 and 1120 A.D., according to Majumdar.<sup>236</sup> From the available evidence, this view (rather than that offered by Kielhorn and Banerji) seems most plausible. It should be further noted that in the preface to his recent book, *History of Ancient Bengal*,<sup>237</sup> Majumdar says that the “problem of Lakṣmaṇasena Era has been solved after an acrimonious controversy of more than half a century.”<sup>238</sup> A comparison of the chapters covering the Senas in both the early edition and the new edition respectively indicate very little change in the author's view from his early to his late writings.

<sup>229</sup> For a recapitulation of the major authors and their views on this subject, see Radha Krishna Chaudhary, “A Critical Estimate of the Lakṣmaṇasamvat (Based on the Examination of Old and New Facts, Literary and Epigraphic),” *JBRSL* XLVII, 1-4 (1961):108-13, especially 108-9 [volume bears also separate title *Mahā-Paṇḍita Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana Memorial Volume*]. This article also includes the most recent evidence regarding La Saṁ. For a clarification of the specific issues involved, see Hemchandra Ray Chaudhari [also spelled Ray Chaudhuri and Raychaudhari, Hem Chandra], “The Lakṣmaṇasena Era,” in *Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes*, 3 vols., (Calcutta: Calcutta University, 1921-25), III:1-5; also in his *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, 2nd rev., enl. ed. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1958), pp. 160-66.

<sup>230</sup> F. Kielhorn, “The Epoch of the Lakṣmaṇasena Era,” *Ind. Ant.* XIX (1890):1-7.

<sup>231</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:230; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 241.

<sup>232</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:233; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 243.

<sup>233</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:230; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 241. In his chronology (Table X in this study), Majumdar uses the date 1158 for the accession of Ballālasena instead of 1159-60, although he gives the latter in his text. With regard to this whole issue, it may be noted that Cunningham believed that the first year of the Lakṣmaṇasena era was 1107 (ASR, XVI, p. vi).

<sup>234</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:233; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 243.

<sup>235</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:235; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 245.

<sup>236</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:238; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 248.

<sup>237</sup> The *History of Ancient Bengal* is, in large part, a reprint of R. C. Majumdar's earlier *The History of Bengal*, vol. I. For an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the revisions and the extent of the revisions, see his Preface to the *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. v-xi.

<sup>238</sup> R.C. Majumdar, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. x.

However, in his later book, he cites recently reconsidered evidence regarding one Aśokacalla mentioned in an inscription found near Gayā and dated 1813 of the Buddhist *Nirvāṇa* era, as corroborated by the biography of Dharmasvāmin, a Tibetan monk who visited India in 1234-1236.<sup>239</sup> Majumdar does not explain how he relates this information to the issue of La Saṁ, however, and therefore I am unable to judge whether indeed the issue is closed as he states in his preface.<sup>240</sup>

The controversy regarding the relationship between Lakṣmaṇasena, the Sena king, and the Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat* is relevant when discussing an image of Caṇḍī (as identified by its inscription) which was found at Rāmpāl, in the Dacca District of Bengal (Fig. 82). The inscription includes the phrase “Śrī Lakṣmaṇasenadevasya Saṁ 3” which can be read as giving the year 3 of the Lakṣmaṇasena *Samvat*, or alternatively, the year 3 of the reign of king Lakṣmaṇasena of Bengal.<sup>241</sup> The inscription further states that the image was begun by the Adhikṛta Dāmodara and was installed by his younger brother Nārāyaṇa.<sup>242</sup> Thus, the image might date from either ca. 1181-82 (the year 3 of king Lakṣmaṇasena), or ca. 1111 or 1122-1123 (the year 3 of Lakṣmaṇasena era). While clearly a work of the 12th century, it is difficult to say on a stylistic basis whether it in fact dates from the first or the last quarter of that century. My personal inclination, based on the fact that the La Saṁ was apparently not current in Bengal, is that the inscription refers to the reign of the Sena king, Lakṣmaṇasena, and thus that the image dates from the late 12th century.

Its stylistic features seem to complete the evolution of the preceding centuries in the stiffening and accentuation of the posture with its exaggerated and distorted forms, such as the large breasts and thrust hip. The top of the stele is not simply pointed but is cusped as if to add an extra flourish to the already floriated patterns of the background. The central goddess is detached from the back-slab and, behind her, the stele has been cut through to allow space around her body. The entire surface of the stele is animated with details, such as the jewelry and floriated motifs, and yet the overall effect is one of stylization and immobility.

The Sena period was brought to a close by the invasion of Muslims into Sena territory. In particular, the conquest of the Turk, Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī (which has been variously dated from 1192-93 to 1203-04<sup>243</sup>) apparently dealt a final blow. The Senas, whose kings were in turn devotees of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Sūrya, are looked upon by the Bengalis as the last Hindu monarchs of Bengal during whose time there was a florescence of art and culture. Jayadeva, for example, the renowned author of the *Gītā Govinda*, was a poet at the court of Lakṣmaṇasena, along with many other less famous, but also talented

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., pp. 245-46. The last paragraph on p. 245 and the first on p. 246 are additions to the chapter, which otherwise is identical to that published in his *History of Bengal*, I. For other discussions of the problem, see Rakhil Das Banerji, “Lakṣmaṇasena,” *JPASB* IX (1913):271-90; A. S. Altekar, “New Light on the History of Bihar and the Origin of Lakṣmaṇasamvat,” in *J. N. Banerjee Vol.*, pp. 110-15. See also idem, Introduction to *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, trans. George N. Roerich (Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1959), pp. xv-xviii; D.C. Sircar, “Three East Indian Inscriptions,” pp. 50-51. Sircar notes that the correct name is Aśokavalla, not Aśokacalla.

<sup>240</sup> R. K. Chaudhary does not find the new evidence so convincing. See his “Critical Estimate,” pp. 108-13.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., pp. 112-13.

<sup>242</sup> See the Appendix, no. 70; also, Bhattasali, “Some Image Inscriptions,” pp. 359-62; Nani Gopal Majumdar, ed., *Inscriptions of Bengal*, vol. III (Rajshahi: Varendra Research Society, 1929), p. 117. See also R. D. Banerji, “Lakṣmaṇasena,” pp. 289-90; Bhattasali, *Iconography*, p. 203.

<sup>243</sup> Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 252-53.

poets. Some of the Sena kings themselves were poets and authors. The close of the Sena period marks the end of an era, but at the same time, the art and culture of the period also set the stage for the revival and florescence of Hinduism, particularly the Vaiṣṇavism of later centuries.<sup>244</sup>

#### MISCELLANEOUS DATED PIECES

Several sculptures dated in other eras add to our knowledge of Pāla-Sena period sculpture. A few give credence to the possibility that the Buddhist and Hindu traditions continued for some time, even though in a more limited way, after the Muslim conquest around the end of the 12th century.<sup>245</sup>

One of the more interesting examples of sculpture associated with a date from eastern India is a slab with a lengthy inscription in Chinese, which also bears a depiction of a Buddha flanked by representations of two goddesses, perhaps Vajravārāhī or Mārīcī, at the top of the slab (Fig. 83). It was found at Bodh Gayā, where other Chinese inscriptions were also discovered. However, to my knowledge, it is the only one which is both sculpted and dated. The inscription records the sentiments of one Yun-shu, a Chinese priest who travelled to India in the company of two other Chinese priests, I-ching and I-lin, and is dated to the equivalent of 1021 A.D.<sup>246</sup> The sculpted portion of the stele shown here reveals a carving style completely in accord with the early 11th century date of the epigraph. Buddha figures are invariably quite conservatively depicted in Pāla-Sena period sculpture and it is often difficult to determine stylistic features of importance to the study of chronology; however, the two depictions of the goddesses suggest their later Pāla period date in the complication of the forms, the exaggerated poses and the full-breasted and round-hipped bodies. The three figures appear in an architectural construct, but it is difficult to determine the specific features of the forms. While thus limited to some extent as an indicator of stylistic progression, the piece is nonetheless of great historical and cultural interest.

A sculpture representing the lower half of a seated Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara found at Giriyeś in the Patna District of Bihar is dated in the year 42 of an unspecified era (Fig. 84).<sup>247</sup> Although the era is not given, it is clear that the piece belongs to the late Pāla period, as may be seen from the elaborate double lotus petals of the Bodhisattva's seat, and the elaboration of the details of the pedestal. It is tempting to suggest that the piece was made during the period of Rāmapāla since he is the only one of the late Pāla kings with a reign known to have lasted at least 42 years. Stylistically, this would indeed be possible, as may be seen by comparing the sculpture to known works from Rāmapāla's reign, such as the figure of Tārā from the 2nd or 3rd year (Fig. 74) or the Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara from the 42nd year (Fig. 75). While the two Khasarpaṇas are clearly not identical, they bear numerous similarities which suggest they were made at approximately

<sup>244</sup> These include the important Vaiṣṇava movement under Caitanya (ca. 1486-1533), for example.

<sup>245</sup> In addition to the pieces illustrated here and included in the Appendix, Patil lists a number of sculptures dated in various eras and mainly of periods later than those of main concern in this book. See his *Antiquarian Remains*, Appendix B, item nos. 29, 30-34, 42, 44-45, 66-67, 70, 90, 180, 190-91, 193, 195. As I did not have illustrations of these pieces and as they are for the most part later, I did not include them.

<sup>246</sup> See the Appendix, no. 72; note my remarks regarding the date, which may be 1022. See also Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, pp. 69-71.

<sup>247</sup> See the Appendix, no. 73.

the same time. However, it is still possible that the year 42 referred to in the Giriyeś piece inscription belongs to another era, and thus, its usefulness as a tool of dating must remain limited.

Broadley noted an intriguing sculpture of a fierce deity which apparently contained a date of the year 892, although an era is not specified. Found at Tetrāwān in the Patna District, the piece, now apparently lost, was described by Broadley in the following manner: "The face is nearly life size and the features hideous—the hair has been drawn like the feathers of a peacock's tail. A cobra's head peeps over the left shoulder."<sup>248</sup> He further states that the two upper hands of the figure hold a sword and a trident in the right and left respectively and the lower hands hold indistinguishable objects. Broadley assumed that the inscription referred to the Vikrama era, thus providing a date in the year 837 A.D. Since I have not located the image, it is impossible for me to comment on the inscription, style or date. It is obviously an unusual subject compared to the other dated images, and thus it would be of great interest to rediscover.

A sculpture inscribed with the name Lakṣmaṇasena can be clearly referred to La Saṁ rather than the reign of Lakṣmaṇasena of the Sena dynasty. It is an image of Durgā which was found at Khojpur in the Darbhanga District of Bihar. Its inscription indicates that it was dedicated in the year 147 of the Lakṣmaṇasena era; apparently it comprises one of the earliest recorded dates of the Lakṣmaṇasena era. Unfortunately, while the inscription of this image has been published,<sup>249</sup> a photograph of the sculpture was not included and it is not possible at this time to determine the importance of the work to the developments of the sculpture of Bihar and Bengal.

The inscription on the back of a small stone image of a seated Tārā (Fig. 85) has been read as a chronogram for the date Śaka 1308 (1386 A.D.).<sup>250</sup> The author of this suggestion does not explain how he has arrived at this conclusion and it is impossible at this time to make a critical evaluation of this theory. If, however, the sculpture indeed bears a date in the 14th century, it raises several issues. Stylistically, the piece appears to be much earlier, perhaps even 9th or 10th century. Thus, either the inscription was added at a later date, or the artist who made the piece may have worked in an archaic style, perhaps looking back to the traditions of Magadha as the standard. This image was found in Bengal at Udaypur Hill, Comilla (formerly Tippera) District, but clearly resembles Magadhan representations of this goddess. The stele shows the rounded form of early Pāla period sculptures, save for the point at the top, and even the figure style is more akin to the Bihar modes of the 9th-10th centuries than to the 11th-12th century forms from Bengal. However, until the inscription is more clearly explained, it is not possible to state whether this is an early Pāla piece or a late but archaistic example.

A Pārvatī image from Chāpālā, Rajshahi District (Fig. 86) bears an inscription dated Śaka era 1579 (1657 A.D.).<sup>251</sup> If the reading of this inscription is correct, and it is contemporary to the carving, this would provide most remarkable evidence of the far-

<sup>248</sup> Broadley, "Buddhist Remains," p. 281. For the inscription, see the Appendix, no. 74. In a letter to me dated 11 December 1980, D.C. Sircar says that the reading of the year as 892 is doubtful.

<sup>249</sup> See the Appendix, no. 75; also, D. C. Sircar, "Some Inscriptions from Bihar," pp. 10-13, especially 11.

<sup>250</sup> See the Appendix, no. 76; also, Narendra Nath Law, "Some Images and Traces of Mahayana Buddhism in Chittagong," *IHQ* VIII, 2 (1932):334.

<sup>251</sup> See the Appendix, no. 77.



reaching effects of the Pāla-Sena sculptural developments.<sup>252</sup> The figure appears to be a much debased version of the finest 12th century idiom, noticeable in the misunderstood slenderness of the body, the opening of the back-slab behind the figure, the elaboration of the composition and the depth of the carving. In all, however, it is a charming representation simply because it is unrestrained in its execution. If it is indeed a 17th century image, it is possible to re-assign several Bengal sculptures which had been dated previously to the 12th century to this later period. Most authors have hesitated to date sculptures of this style and type from Bihar and Bengal posterior to the time of the Muslim conquest at the end of the 12th century, although they have generally agreed that traces of activity might be found. However, it is possible that some of these sculptures, if not many, may indeed be the products of later centuries.

#### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

It can be seen from the dated sculptures from Bihar and Bengal that the stylistic developments from the pre-Pāla and early Pāla periods to the late Pāla and Sena periods proceed in a rather straight line. In general, stone carvings become increasingly ornate and detailed. The central figure in later works is often much more three-dimensionally carved than the surrounding elements and may be almost completely detached from the back-slab, in contrast to earlier examples where a greater evenness of carving depth occurs over the whole sculpture. In later works, which are often larger in actual size than earlier ones, the central figure is usually smaller in proportion to the overall slab or casting than seen in earlier examples. Also, later works reveal much more accentuated postures, more crisply defined facial features and more exaggerated body proportions, especially visible in female figures. By and large, these stylistic developments seem to evolve at a rather consistent pace over the approximately four hundred year time span, and in general, they parallel stylistic patterns towards elaboration and stylization of form occurring at the same approximate time in other schools of South Asian art. Both stone and metal images of the 11th and 12th centuries are marked by a wonderful technical skill, and often have highly polished, sleek surfaces. Metal images may appear more linear in certain aspects of the design than occurs in late stone sculptures, but both reveal other features of the late style developments.

While the dated sculptures provide important evidence of the artistic trends which occurred in Bihar and Bengal during the 9th-12th centuries, by no means does a chronological sequence clarify all aspects of the stylistic developments during this period. It is left to fill in the gaps between the dated pieces by using numerous other examples of sculpture from this period to define the regional and geographic patterns, the schools and perhaps even the workshops, which were responsible for the great majority of these images.

<sup>252</sup> Dr. Mukhlesur Rahman, Director of the Varendra Research Museum, feels that the inscription must have been added later and that the carving itself was probably done in the 12th century (personal communication). Indeed, the contents of the inscription do not preclude such a possibility.

## CHAPTER FOUR STONE SCULPTURE OF BIHAR

### INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHICAL PROBLEMS

It has already been mentioned that Pāla-Sena period sculptures may not be fully explained simply in terms of a straight line, chronological sequence. Regional and local styles arising from dependence on different artistic traditions as well as differing social, religious and political conditions account for major aspects of their stylistic characteristics. Broadly speaking, the numerous sites and districts bearing the majority of Pāla-Sena period sculptures may be divided into two geographic groups, roughly corresponding to Bihar, on the one hand, and Bengal, including both the eastern region in Bangladesh and the western portion in India, on the other. This division is not simply a convenient geographic distinction, but rather, arises from the fact that while each region maintained extensive contact with the other, it also retained its individuality as can be seen in the discernible differences in their art styles.

One basis for the consideration of Bihar as a unit apart from that of Bengal is mainly religious. Bihar, and its nucleus of Magadha, had been a major focus of Buddhist and Jain religious activity at least since the 5th century B.C., the time during which both the Buddha and Mahāvīra were alive. Throughout the following centuries, this region remained unified because of the network of holy places associated with these leaders within it, regardless of the political fortunes of the princes or kings who had temporal control over it. By the time of the early Pāla emperors, Magadha had few competitors as a major center of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India, as monasteries such as those at Nālandā, Kurkihār and Uddanāpura became active. Other regions in Bihar, both north and south of the Ganges, fell within the sphere of influence generated by the Magadhan centers, and thus, while exhibiting local characteristics of their own, their art styles clearly reflect those found in Magadha or roughly, the Patna and Gaya Districts.<sup>1</sup>

In Bengal, unity was not achieved on the basis of religious motivation. While Buddhist establishments of great stature are known to have existed there, the region itself could not claim the same historical ties to Buddhism as could Magadha. Frequently, art production

<sup>1</sup> The district names used for Bihar in this volume do not reflect the changes made in the mid-1970s, although these, along with the district changes in Bangladesh, are provided on the detailed map of the Eastern Gangetic Region. The recent redistricting does not materially change the ideas presented here and, since information about the new districts has only become available very recently, I was not able to use it while preparing the bulk of this manuscript. Briefly, in Bihar, the following new districts have been created: West Champaran and East Champaran (from Champaran), Gopalganj and Siwan (from Saran), Sitamarhi and Vaishali (from Muzaffarpur), Madhubani and Samastipur (from Darbhanga), Begusarai (from Monghyr), Katihar (from Purnea), Rohtas and Bhojpur (from Shahabad), Nalanda (from Patna), Aurangabad and Nawada (from Gaya), Giridih (from Hazaribagh). Still extant, although partitioned, are: Saran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Purnea, Patna, Gaya, Monghyr and Hazaribagh Districts. The districts of Champaran and Shahabad are now defunct. See Joseph E. Schwartzberg, ed., *A Historical Atlas of South Asia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 263. I am grateful to Professor Schwartzberg for providing me with further information on the redistricting in Bihar and in Bangladesh.



was generated by political rulers, or other prominent individuals who employed craftsmen to build capital cities and to decorate religious buildings. The ancient principalities of Bengal (Vaṅga, Samatāṭa, etc.) were linked by means of the extensive fabric of waterways characterizing the deltaic countryside, and although these divisions roughly correspond to regionally distinct art styles, their underlying homogeneity combines them into a group and sets them apart from the sculptures of Bihar.

The easternmost districts of Bihar (ancient Aṅga), especially that of Bhagalpur, serve as an interface between Bihar and Bengal, and frequently, the sculptures found there exhibit characteristics of each region.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it is possible to view the stylistic developments of Bihar and Bengal as a continuum with many of the links in evidence, as shall be demonstrated in this and subsequent chapters.

This continuum does not take place merely in space, but also reflects the modification of art styles as they occurred in time. Generally speaking, early Pāla period sculptural remains (up to the 10th century) are more numerous in Magadha and later material (11th and 12th century) is primarily found in Bengal, or outlying regions of eastern Bihar. Thus, a gradual movement in a southeasterly direction resulted in a shift in the location of the center of greatest artistic activity from Magadha in the early Pāla period to Bengal in the later Pāla and Sena period. While already-founded establishments in Bihar often maintained active art production until the Muslim conquest at the end of the 12th or beginning of the 13th century, when new communities were established, they tended to take root farther east in Bengal.

The explanation of this general tendency is not simple. The continuing threat of Muslim attacks from the west undoubtedly encouraged an eastward migration. In addition, the Pālas were forced at times to relinquish their holdings in Bihar as raids by the Pratihāras, Gāhaḍavālas and other competing Indian dynasts caused them to retreat into Bengal. The Senas at no time had large holdings in Bihar but were strictly centered in portions of Bengal.

Perhaps more significant than these political explanations, however, is the fact that by the 11th century, Buddhism was no longer the undisputed leader among religions in northern and eastern India. It is, indeed, difficult to postulate the reasons for the upsurge of Brahmanical religions (especially Vaiṣṇavism) at that time. Frequently, the prevalence of tantrism and tantric practices are blamed as a decadent feature of Buddhism, resulting in the undermining of the Buddhist religion, thereby causing both a decline in Buddhism and allowing an increase in the popularity of Brahmanical sects simultaneously. However, since tantrism was a strong force in some forms of Brahmanism as well, this supposition is not necessarily viable. Further, the long survival of tantric Buddhism in Nepal and Tibet would belie the assertion that these forms necessarily cause self-destruction. Thus, while the empirical evidence of simply counting the numbers of Brahmanical images in the 11th and 12th centuries as opposed to the Buddhist ones clearly demonstrates that this transformation had taken place, it is a most complicated subject to determine the probable causes.

<sup>2</sup> Bindeshwari Prasad Sinha (*The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha [cir. 455-1000 A.D.]* [Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1954], pp. xiii-xiv) notes that by the 6th century B.C., Aṅga had been absorbed into Magadha. However, it was not the "homeland of the Buddha," as was Magadha; and religiously, artistically, and culturally, the regions apparently remained distinct, as is evidenced in art. See also the discussion below, pp. 123-31.

With decreased emphasis on Buddhism, it was no longer necessary to cling to Magadha, the homeland of Buddhism, as an artistic center, and it is easy to see why, considering the political threats from the west, new centers might spring up in Bengal. In general terms then, it is possible to state that statistical patterns of Bihar sculpture during the Pāla-Sena period demonstrate the Buddhist supremacy along with the genesis of Brahmanical activity, while the sculptures of Bengal reflect both the decline of Buddhist activity and the Brahmanical ascendancy.

A major instrument of transport of ideas and styles between Bihar and Bengal was, of course, the Ganges River, which traverses Bihar and becomes a vast network of waterways in Bengal, finally emptying into the Bay of Bengal. Unless the choice of site was dictated by religious or other specific reasons, invariably communities and establishments were founded in locations accessible to waterways leading into the Ganges, if not on it, in Bihar, or along the many branches of it in Bengal.

This chapter, and the three following ones, are devoted to the discussion of the local and regional schools of Bihar and those in Bengal. Obviously, it is not possible to discuss every individual local style and thus emphasis has been placed on the major centers of production. Stone and metal sculptures will be treated separately in order to best determine stylistic trends. While this section is mainly an attempt to deal with specific developments, the general west-east movement and shift in religious emphasis should not be forgotten.

#### GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS IN BIHAR

Although this chapter treats only sculptures that have been found in the modern state of Bihar, primarily those from southern Bihar, it is incorrect to think of this region as a strict unit during the Pāla period. At that time, this region consisted of several smaller units with somewhat flexible borders. Probably the most ancient of these were the kingdoms of Magadha and Aṅga. Although at times Magadha included a vast portion of Bihar, the central core of this region at all times was what are now the Patna and Gaya Districts.<sup>3</sup> For our purposes, the term Magadha will be used in the narrow sense and will refer specifically to this small area. By far the greatest concentration of Pāla-Sena period sculptures are found in Magadha. The ancient kingdom of Aṅga consisted of portions of southern Monghyr and Bhagalpur Districts, or generally speaking, that portion of Bihar lying east of Magadha but west of the Rājmaḥāl Hills.<sup>4</sup> Some writers are of the opinion that Aṅga extended northward as well and may have included portions of Purnea District.<sup>5</sup> In either case, Aṅga served as an interface region between Magadha and the kingdoms of Bengal. At various points in the history of the Pāla period, these regions achieved varying degrees of unity.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See n. 1 above.

<sup>4</sup> Radha Krishna Chaudhary, *History of Bihar* (Delhi, Benares, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1958), p. 13. It is evident that there are various definitions of Aṅga, perhaps arising from its changing borders throughout history. However, for our purposes, this region as defined seemed fairly stable and accurate.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> It is beyond the scope of this study to deal with the continuously changing borders of these regions since, in many cases, the changes did not affect the art at various religious establishments. The Pālas did, of course, effectively rule much of this region, and therefore they unified it. However, the regions probably never lost their identifications as entities, as can be seen from travellers' accounts and even from inscriptions which refer to them by their names.

The other portions of Bihar which are of concern to us are the western districts of Shahabad, which is south of the Ganges River, and Saran, which is north of the Ganges. Throughout the pre-Pāla and Pāla periods, the entire region of Bihar and Bengal was subject to attack by various forces from central and western India. As might be expected, Shahabad and Saran Districts bore the brunt of these invasions most of the time. As a consequence, the art styles which grew up in these areas reflect much of this external influence and, eventually, some of these characteristics emerge in the sculpture of Magadha, Aṅga and even Bengal. The earliest contacts of concern to us are those of the Later Guptas whose influence was felt throughout Bihar and Bengal, but especially in the Shahabad District. Later, in the 9th-11th centuries, strong Cedi influence is seen in the Saran District (Figs. 158-159), and possibly, some of this eventually found its way to Bengal.

The southernmost regions of Bihar, such as Ranchi, Singhbhum and Palamau Districts, bear some Pāla period remains but may not be considered primary Pāla art centers until more significant evidence is found. Rather, these districts might be termed peripheral and their art traditions are somewhat provincial manifestations of the primary developments occurring in other parts of Bihar. North of the Ganges, the administrative unit (*bhukti*) called Tirabhukti<sup>7</sup> also bears many Pāla period remains. This region includes modern Saran District, mentioned above, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Northern Monghyr, Saharsa and Purnea. While sculptural remains there are more significant than those of the southernmost districts, these too must be considered somewhat peripheral.

Roughly speaking, whenever possible, a chronological order will be maintained in discussing the regional art styles. That is, Shahabad, with its primarily pre-Pāla and early Pāla period material, will be discussed first. Then, the main centers of Magadha will be treated. The discussion of Aṅga, bearing remains which are often similar to both those of Magadha and those of Bengal, primarily of the late Pāla period, will serve as a link between those two territories. Saran District will be treated last since the sculptures of interest from that region fall in the later Pāla period.

#### WESTERN BIHAR

##### THE SHAHABAD DISTRICT (Pre-Pāla and Early Pāla Period Brahmanical Remains)

The site of Muṇḍeśvarī in the Shahabad District has already been discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to the central Indian style found in Magadha around the 7th century. Sculptured figures were round and full, reflecting the central Indian Gupta style. Several other sites in Shahabad District are also distinctive in their stylistic dependence on non-Sārnāth Gupta styles.

##### Masārḥ

The village of Masārḥ was noted as early as the 19th century by both Buchanan-Hamilton<sup>8</sup> and Cunningham<sup>9</sup> who each described the ruined temples at the site and noted

<sup>7</sup> Tirabhukti is equivalent to modern Mithilā. The name, Tirabhukti, is apparently not as ancient as those of Magadha and Aṅga.

<sup>8</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, pp. 271-75.

<sup>9</sup> Cunningham, ASR, III, pp. 66-71; see also Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, pp. 271-75.

its antiquities. Cunningham identified Masārḥ with Hsüan Tsang's "Mahāsara" (Mo-no-so-lo),<sup>10</sup> and indeed, the non-Buddhist remains which have been found there would indicate that this is the site Hsüan Tsang described as inhabited by Brahmins.<sup>11</sup> In spite of its possible importance, Masārḥ has never been excavated and comparatively few sculptures have been recovered there.

A colossal figure of Viṣṇu attended by one male and one female figure, perhaps *cakrapuruṣa* and *gadādevī* (Fig. 87), is presently in the garden of the Patna Museum.<sup>12</sup> Stylistically, the work exhibits the broad, stocky body build that is prevalent in the non-Sārnāth oriented art schools of Bihar found especially throughout the western portion of the region in the pre-Pāla period. Although the central figure stands in a stiff and static pose, the two attendants appear relaxed and lively, suggesting that Viṣṇu's function as an icon rather than stylistic considerations had determined his posture. The short body proportions of the two smaller figures along with their earring styles, the treatment of the dhoti of the main figure and his crown suggest that this sculpture was carved around the 7th century and may be compared to the material from Muṇḍeśvarī. The facial features of the central figure have been recut and it is not possible to determine their original form.

##### Deo-Baruṇārḥ

Like Masārḥ, Deo-Baruṇārḥ did not escape the attention of both Buchanan-Hamilton and Cunningham who each refer to seven or eight Brahmanical temples at the site.<sup>13</sup> An inscription on one of the carved pillars found at Deo-Baruṇārḥ records the continuance of the grant of a village to the sun god by Jīvitagupta, the last king of the Later Guptas of Magadha, who ruled a short time before the end of the second quarter of the 8th century.<sup>14</sup> However, some of the remains apparently date from the 7th century on the basis of style, while others appear to be from later periods, including the 9th and 11th centuries. For example, a depiction of Sūrya from the site (Fig. 88) relates strongly to sculptures found at Āpsāḍh (Fig. 95) which are rather securely dated to the 7th century by association with the inscription of Ādityasena.<sup>15</sup> Similar features include the rather short body proportions, the flat tops to the crowns, rather taut and flattened appearance of the bodies and relative simplicity of the jewelry, compared to Pāla period examples. The continuous bead motif along the perimeter of the round halo derives from 5th century Sārnāth prototypes and is a

<sup>10</sup> Cunningham, ASR, III, pp. 66-71. See also Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (A.D. 629-645)*, ed. after Watters' death by T. W. Rhys Davids and S. W. Bushell, 2 vols. (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1904-5; reprint ed., 2 vols. in 1, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1961), II:60; Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 273.

<sup>11</sup> Watters, *Yuan Chwang's Travels*, II:60.

<sup>12</sup> This image fits the description of a colossal image noticed by Buchanan-Hamilton and identified by him as Vāsudeva or Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa. In 1882, this image was supposedly removed by the Mahārāja of Dumraon to his garden at Arrah. In his discussion of the antiquities at Arrah, Patil (*Antiquarian Remains*, p. 6) indicates that the image was still at that place at the time of his writing in 1963. Unless the image was removed to the Patna Museum since that date, it may not be the same sculpture. However, because Patil did not actually visit the many sites included in his survey, but rather relied upon written accounts, it is possible that this transfer had been made without his knowledge. I am of the opinion that the Patna Museum image is the same as the one noticed by Buchanan-Hamilton, especially since I feel it is unlikely that a second colossus could have gone unnoticed until its acquisition by the Patna Museum.

<sup>13</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, pp. 99-103; Cunningham and Garrick, ASR, XVI, pp. 64-81.

<sup>14</sup> Chaudhary, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 9, and pp. 31-32 for the text of the inscription.

<sup>15</sup> See pp. 88-90 below.

common feature of 7th-8th century stone and metal sculptures in central India and Bihar and Bengal as well as at Sārnāth. When it appears alone, that is, without flame or other accompanying motifs, it may be used as a key dating element since it is supplanted by other forms by the 9th century to a large extent. Another image, a depiction of Umā-Maheśvara (Fig. 89) with its fleshy bodies, more elaborate collar-like necklaces, large round earrings and distinctive head-dresses finds closer comparison in these elements to late 9th century works, such as the Tārā from Mahendrapāla's reign (Fig. 40), or those from approximately the 10th century such as a representation of Mañjuśrī Kumāra from Guneri (Fig. 119). The fact that it is made of the grey-black stone used commonly in Gaya and other districts of Bihar, and its resemblance to works from Magadha rather than Shahabad District, suggest that in fact it may not have been a local product, but rather an import from an adjacent or nearby region. Comparable features between the Umā-Maheśvara and the Tārā and Mañjuśrī Kumāra images include the treatment of the lotus pedestals and their petals in terms of shape and the outlining of the forms, the shapes of the heads and proportions and forms of the bodies, especially with reference to the figures of Śiva and Mañjuśrī Kumāra, the decoration of the headbands, similarly shaped arm-bands, and the treatment of the features of the face, including the incising of the eyes and eyebrows and their high, arching shapes.

Similarly, another sculpture from Deo-Baruṇārka depicting Umā-Maheśvara may have been the product of a school of sculpture outside of Shahabad (Fig. 90). This work is unmistakably a creation of the late 10th or early 11th century, as seen by comparison to dated sculptures of the reign of Mahīpāla I, particularly the Nārāyaṇpur Gaṇeśa (Fig. 53). Shared features include the twisted garlands framed by flattened flames around the perimeter of the back-slabs and the strikingly similar hair styles of Śiva and Gaṇeśa who also wear comparable but not identical jewelry in terms of complexity and amount and the distinctive collar type necklace seen commonly after the 9th century. Flying *vidyādhara*s at the tops of each stele are nearly identical. The general stylistic configuration of the Umā-Maheśvara is so close to that of a number of images from the 10th-11th centuries found in Bihar and Bengal that it must be considered a product of a fairly widespread stylistic phenomenon. As in the case of the preceding sculpture, it is carved of grey-black stone and, again, it is difficult to know whether it was a product of a Shahabad District workshop, or had been imported from elsewhere. In light of the paucity of similar examples from Shahabad, in contrast to their relative abundance in other parts of Bihar and Bengal, I would suggest that it was not a local product.

#### *Deo-Markaṇḍeya*

Located hardly twenty kilometers from Deo-Baruṇārka, the site of Deo-Markaṇḍeya shares many topographical features with it, not the least of which is the presence of a Sun temple, in each case later converted to the worship of Viṣṇu.<sup>16</sup> An important inscription noted by Buchanan-Hamilton in the 19th century has since been lost, but most probably belonged to the Later Guptas as had been the case at Deo-Baruṇārka.<sup>17</sup> Sculptural remains from Deo-Markaṇḍeya show little or no evidence of Sārnāth influence, a phenomenon we

shall come to expect more often than not in pre-Pāla and early Pāla sculpture of non-Buddhist subject matter. Instead, the figures rely heavily on the local Bihar tradition of the Later Gupta and ultimately central Indian schools. For example, three very similar representations of Viṣṇu (Fig. 91) depict the god with round and broad body forms, which are still rather short in proportion. Although they are clearly related to sculptures of a slightly earlier date, such as the Viṣṇu from Masārh (Fig. 87), they are more closely associated with works of around the time of Devapāla in the first part of the 9th century (Figs. 101-102), and probably date from the late 8th or early 9th century. A fully developed stele format has been achieved in the unified contour of the back-slabs, in contrast to forms seen frequently in the 7th century, such as some examples from Muṇḍeśvarī (Fig. 22). The rather unadorned back-slabs differ significantly from the elaborately decorated ones to be found at a later date in Bihar and Bengal (e.g. Figs. 155, 238).

#### *Conclusions About Shahabad District*

The three sites discussed above, along with the material from Muṇḍeśvarī discussed in Chapter 2, summarize the pre-Pāla and Pāla period sculptural developments in the Shahabad District in several ways. Each site showed extensive influence of the central Indian Gupta style source, and each was associated with the Later Guptas of Magadha, either by inscriptional evidence, sculptural styles or both. It may be suggested, in fact, that the Later Gupta styles in fact were heavily influenced by the non-Sārnāth modes of Gupta sculpture. Artistic activity in the Shahabad District continued into the early Pāla period, but there is generally little evidence of extensive later Pāla period artistic production, or, as in the case of Deo-Baruṇārka, later remains are of questionable local origin. The local sculptures showed round and full figures, rather squat in body proportions, with heavy leanings on the central Indian rather than Sārnāth traditions. In each case, the subject matter of the images was strictly non-Buddhist. Patil's exhaustive survey<sup>18</sup> in fact lists no pre-Pāla or Pāla period site in the Shahabad District which is positively Buddhist, although one or two have yielded miscellaneous Buddhist images. It thus appears that there is a strong relationship between style and subject matter in this case and we may identify what may be termed a pre-Pāla Brahmanical style complex which depended on central Indian rather than Sārnāth stylistic modes. This tradition also permeated the adjacent Patna and Gaya Districts to a certain extent as will be seen below.

In many respects, the artistic developments of the Shahabad District are highly distinctive and seem unrelated to the mainstream of Bihar and Bengal sculptures. Indeed, the Brahmanical rather than Buddhist subject matter sets apart the Shahabad District artistic remains from the other schools of Bihar sculpture to a great extent, but the strong associations with central Indian artistic styles is also distinctive. A certain psychological separation between the Shahabad and adjacent districts of Magadha might have existed because of the presence of the Son River between them; however, in light of what must have been easy access to different regions of India without regard for rivers or other natural boundaries, this hardly seems to be reason enough to account for the distinctiveness of the art schools. To some extent, the Magadhan association with Buddhism, and hence other Buddhist sites, such as Sārnāth, must be seen as having had influence on developments in

<sup>16</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 113.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>18</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*.

that region. In contrast, the western region of Bihar, the Shahabad District, may have had close cultural and historical ties to central India which might have had bearing on the development of its culture. Regardless of the reasons, it is an observable trait that the Shahabad District remains are, for the most part, distinct in style and subject matter from the predominant developments in Magadha.

## MAGADHA

### THE GAYA DISTRICT

The Gaya District, along with the Patna District, served as the nucleus of Magadha since the time of the Buddha in the 5th century B.C. and perhaps, even earlier. It has been suggested that the Buddha in fact came to Magadha because of the repute of certain holy men who were living there, namely, the three Kaśyapa brothers.<sup>19</sup> Both the Buddha and Mahāvīra spent much of their lives in this region and, subsequently, it became in effect a kind of holy land to the followers of both Buddhism and Jainism. Throughout its known history, this important area has been continuously inhabited and has been host to countless religious establishments and institutions. During the Pāla period in particular, Magadha underwent a period of fervent religious and artistic activity. The resemblance between images found at different sites in the Gaya and Patna Districts suggest that an effective Magadhan style complex may be defined. However, beyond this, differences between Gaya District and Patna District art may also be discerned.

### Āpsādh

The Āpsādh stone inscription of Ādityasena, a king of the Guptas of Magadha, is not dated but is generally accepted as a document of the late 7th century,<sup>20</sup> although Later Gupta rule continued into the 8th century. The inscription records the erection of a Viṣṇu temple at the order of this king, a religious college by his mother and the excavation of a tank by his queen.<sup>21</sup> Āpsādh has only been partially explored, but the large conical mound and stray sculptures lying about are almost certainly the remains of the temple of this royal commission some time in the late 7th century, although specific evidence of the latter two items (the tank and the college or monastery) are still to be found. Most of the sculptures found in the vicinity are pre-Pāla in date and include the stucco reliefs adorning the exterior of the temple as well as stone carvings.

At present, only one corner of the temple has been exposed and the stucco plaques thereby discovered are protected by an improvised shed. The stuccos are narrative in content and represent scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa*.<sup>22</sup> There is no reason to suppose that they date from a time other than the period of construction of the temple and therefore they

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>20</sup> Fleet, *Inscriptions*, pp. 200-208 and pl. xxviii. Akshay Kumar Maitra (*The Ancient Monuments of Varendra [North Bengal]* [Rajshahi: Varendra Research Society, n.d. (1949?)], p. x) gives a date of 672 A.D. for the epigraph but does not explain the means of calculation used.

<sup>21</sup> Fleet, *Inscriptions*, p. 208.

<sup>22</sup> Bindeshwari Prasad Sinha, "Representation of Ramayanic Scenes in an Old Temple Wall at Apsad," *JBRSLIV*, 1-4 (1968): 216-18.

may be ascribed to the late 7th century A.D. The style and subject matter of these plaques basically falls outside the scope of the present study, although it should be noted that they probably represent a major art form of the pre-Pāla period.<sup>23</sup>

Many of the images found at Āpsādh from the pre-Pāla period reveal characteristics which have been noted in the early Brahmanical sculptures of the Shahabad District, most notably, a strong influence of the central Indian carving styles. Indeed, the fact that the remains at Āpsādh are all Hindu—not a single Buddhist image has been found—reinforces the theory that the early Brahmanical art of eastern India had as one of its primary sources, the art of central India, rather than the art of Sārnāth. The famous theriomorphic depiction of Varāha, still actively worshipped at the site today, is a clear example of the central Indian style as manifested at Āpsādh (Fig. 92). Its resemblance to comparable Varāha images found in central India, especially Madhya Pradesh, is striking. The fact that it is not carved of the grey-black stone so typical of later images of Gaya District again suggests ties to the central Indian tradition as manifested in western Bihar. Possibly associated with Ādityasena's royal donation of the late 7th century, the carving is highly animated, with the boar as well as the figures of the earth goddess and others depicted on his body carved with a great degree of three-dimensionality and soft modelling.

A similar dynamism occurs in a life-sized depiction of Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardini in worship at Āpsādh (Fig. 93). This eight-armed goddess might also have been executed during the late 7th century as judged by comparison to the Varāha. The softly modelled, rounded forms of her body are reminiscent of those of the earth goddess being held aloft by Varāha's tusk (Fig. 92) and the vigor of her lion recalls that of the theriomorph. Still betraying traces of Gupta style, most notably traits found throughout central India, the lion's mane and the goddess' ornaments are deeply carved. Resemblance between the Durgā and the dated image of Sarvāṇī of the Khadga dynasty (Fig. 26) must also be noted, reinforcing the suggestion of a late 7th century date. Beyond the superficial commonality created by the fact that both goddesses are eight-armed and have lion *vāhanas*, the two are strikingly similar from a stylistic point of view. In both, the display of arms lacks the organic feeling to be found in later images; in both cases, it is the principal pair of hands which seem to grow most naturally from the body. The two goddesses are very similarly proportioned, and each has high, full, round breasts which appear to be pressed very close together. Compared to later examples, the lion *vāhanas* are highly naturalistic, and reveal associations with Gupta rather than later art.

Several sculptures at Āpsādh, along with a few others which are in museums or private collections, at first glance seem to suggest that a second style existed at Āpsādh. In each case, the god depicted is either Sūrya (Fig. 94) or Viṣṇu (Fig. 95).<sup>24</sup> The flattened treatment of the body forms in these images, most noticeable in the chest and thighs of the main gods, contrasts sharply with the fully modelled forms of Durgā in the preceding image. However, it is likely that these sculptures also date from the late 7th century, or the period of Ādityasena's donation. The Sūrya image, for example, is strikingly reminiscent of the depiction of the same god from Muṇḍeśvarī (Fig. 23), which is probably a work of the 7th century. Not only are the rather squat body proportions of the two gods similar,

<sup>23</sup> For illustrations of these scenes, see B. P. Sinha, "Representation of Ramayanic Scenes," pls. XVII-XXII; and Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, pls. 83-86.

<sup>24</sup> See Asher, "Former Broadley Collection," p. 123, for a discussion of the provenance of this Viṣṇu image.

but they both wear the flattened crowns encrusted with ornamentation which seem to be typical of the 7th century. It is likely that the Muṇḍeśvarī image predates that from Āpsādh, by perhaps as much as half a century; however, their underlying similarities cannot be ignored. Another aspect of the Āpsādh Sūrya image which suggests that it was made in the late 7th century, or contemporaneous with the Ādityasena inscription, is the resemblance of the small attendant figures with their lively poses and highly modelled bodies to the human figures in the Varāha and Durgā images previously discussed (Figs. 92 and 93). Possibly, the restrained and stiff appearance of the central god was the result of iconographic strictures and thus does not signify a change in stylistic direction. By association, the Viṣṇu figure illustrated (Fig. 95) is also likely to date from the same period, as are the others of this type.<sup>25</sup> The tie-like sash around Sūrya's waist is a feature seen on other Bihar sculptures which may be dated to the 7th century. The row of beads outlining the halos of the attendant figures is related to this feature of the Sūrya image from Deo-Baruṇārka (Fig. 88). Both features are well within the expectations for works of art from this period and region.

The site of Āpsādh may have had only one period of construction, that associated with the Ādityasena inscription, since none of the images remaining at the site or in collections elsewhere appear to be of a later date. Within the spectrum of these images, however, there is a noticeable range of artistic quality as well as variations within the definable parameters of 7th century sculpture.

#### Surjan Giri

Atop one of the highest peaks in the Barābar Hill range in the Gaya District, the Surajāṅka or Surjan Giri,<sup>26</sup> a rather recent temple dedicated to Śiva has been built upon the foundations of an ancient temple. An inscription nearby in the Vāpī cave in the Nāgārjunī Hill refers to the worship of the god Siddheśvara. It is presumed that this inscription is associated with the original temple and dates from the 7th century.<sup>27</sup> The climb leading up to the temple passes along several cliffs in which are carved the images of various Brahmanical deities. Although organized in an orderly manner and probably meant to be a group, these sculptures do not fall directly within the traditions of pre-Pāla and Pāla period sculpture although they probably date from the ca. 7th-9th century. Instead, they seem to be the product of a very local, insular carving tradition rather than the mainstream workshops, and therefore will not be discussed here.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Perhaps the most beautiful stone sculpture yet recovered from Āpsādh is the Viṣṇu now in the collection of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller III. (For discussion of the documentation of this piece and an illustration, see Margaret F. Marcus, "Sculptures from Bihar and Bengal," *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, Oct. 1967, pp. 245-46.) The refinement of the carving of this sculpture, the slenderness, and the less stocky proportions of the body compared to other works from Āpsādh might suggest at first glance that it is the product of a different stylistic milieu; however, the piece clearly falls within the parameters of the Āpsādh idiom, although it is obviously the work of a master craftsman.

<sup>26</sup> The name Surajāṅka is given in J. D. Beglar [also known as Joseph D. Melik-Beglaroff] (under superintendence of Alexander Cunningham), *Report of a Tour through the Bengal Provinces of Patna, Gaya, Mongir and Bhagalpur; the Santal Parganas, Manbhum, Singhbhum, and Birbhum; Bankura, Raniganj, Bardwan, and Hughli in 1872-73*, ASR, VIII (Calcutta, 1878; reprint ed., Delhi and Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966), pp. 36-37; however, local residents today refer to the place as Surjan Giri.

<sup>27</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 17; Cunningham, ASR, I, p. 50.

<sup>28</sup> For an illustration and discussion, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 106 and p. 150.

The present Śiva temple contains many images, presumably collected from the ruins of the previous temple which had occupied this location or from other ruined structures nearby. Numerous sculptures of the pre-Pāla and Pāla periods are strewn around the grounds of this temple or are cemented into the walls of the compound. By far, the majority of images found at Surjan Giri date from the 7th-8th century on the basis of their stylistic relation to other sculpture schools of Bihar at that time, for example, that of Āpsādh just discussed, thus suggesting that they were the products of the original building program of the temple. The sculptures are strictly Brahmanical in subject matter, although not all are Śaivite, perhaps indicating that there were other temples as well. In style, the early pieces are indebted to the central Indian rather than Sārnāth tradition. Once again, therefore, evidence for what I have called the "pre-Pāla Brahmanical style" may be found.

An image of Sūrya (Fig. 96) is strikingly similar to the late 7th century Sūrya from Āpsādh (Fig. 94) in the short, stocky body, the conical crown, the hair beneath the headband of the crown falling in ringlets, the clothing style, belt and sash, and even the placement of the two attendant figures, thus suggesting a similar date of manufacture, ca. late 7th century. The bead pattern noticed around the halos of the two minor figures in the Āpsādh sculpture is present around the entire slab in the example from Surjan Giri. In both cases, as well as in numerous other sculptures from this region and probable period, the figures appear to be crowded into a very small space, with the rim of the halo/back-slab just barely able to contain all of the figures. This use of space in sculptures falling at the beginning of the Pāla-Sena continuum may be contrasted with sculptures of later periods in which the back-slab and its elements often dominate the central figures.<sup>29</sup>

Other sculptures in a style similar to that of the Sūrya indicate a fairly active period of production at Surjan Giri during the late 7th century. Images of later periods are also present; however, some are said to have been collected from nearby hills so their original provenance is lost. One example shows Viṣṇu in a style that suggests that it was made in the 9th century, perhaps around the time of the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 97). Compared to the Sūrya illustrated from this site, the Viṣṇu seems more elongated and his ornamentation is much more elaborate as seen in the double-strand necklace, prominent earrings and large arm-bands. In contrast to many pre-Pāla period depictions of Viṣṇu, two of the four arms of the god are in an upwards position.<sup>30</sup> These elements may be compared to sculptures from the reign of Devapāla, such as the Balarāma from Nālandā (Fig. 30), which probably dates from that time. The incised double lines of the lower garment worn by the god are seen widely in Pāla period sculptures but are not a general feature of pre-Pāla works. The jaunty postures of Viṣṇu's two attendants and their body proportions are similar to the figures flanking the Nālandā Balarāma. However, the stiff posture and relative heaviness of the body seen in the Surjan Giri Viṣṇu may reflect a hold-over of the central Indian mode at this non-Buddhist site, as compared to the more Sārnāth influenced and rapidly developing forms of Nālandā.

While the majority of images found at the site may be dated to the periods described above, that is, the late 7th century through the 9th century, a dozen or so images also found there are the products of a later time and suggest the possibility that there were at

<sup>29</sup> See Figs. 236, 237, etc.

<sup>30</sup> Compare to earlier examples such as Figs. 3, 4, etc.



least two periods of artistic activity at the site. These include standing figures of Pārvaṭī, seated Cāmuṇḍās, Gaṇeśas and a Varāha (Fig. 98). These images are generally much larger in size than the early sculptures, measuring about 150 to 200 cm. in height as opposed to 60 to 100 cm. This factor is entirely in keeping with the normal expectations for Pāla period sculptural development and may be seen as a general artistic trend.

The figure of Varāha (Fig. 98) may serve as an example of the stylistic developments of this later stage. With the exception of the foliate motif along the outside of the back-slab, the other features of the stele may be considered typical for sculptures of the early 11th century (around the time of Mahīpāla I). The human body of this representation of the boar incarnation of Viṣṇu is nearly identical in treatment to that of the Bāghāurā Viṣṇu (Fig. 52) dated in the reign of Mahīpāla I. Especially to be noticed are the similarly proportioned torsos and the method of depicting the necklace as a stiff collar within which is a single strand of gems. Also comparable are the folds of the garment across the torso, the placement and design of the girdles and the locks of hair falling over the shoulders which are much reduced in importance compared to the examples seen in the 7th and 8th centuries. In both cases, the pedestals are divided into three portions (*triratha*), with the central segment being the widest. The depiction of the lotus petals is identical in both stelae. In addition, the overall shapes of the stelae, rounded at the top, as well as proportions of height to width of the stelae are remarkably similar.

It should be noted that the examples chosen to illustrate style at Surjan Giri are not Śaivite in subject matter but were chosen to control style as a sequence. Śaivite sculptures in the same style do abound at the site, however, as might be expected. By far the most popular subject of the sculptures found there today is Umā-Maheśvara, with the two figures shown side by side or with Umā seated upon the left leg of Śiva and with his right hand under her chin. Most of these sculptures date from the 7th-8th centuries according to the stylistic criteria which have been set forth above, but since they are, for the most part, in such damaged condition, an example has not been included in the basic discussion of style.<sup>31</sup> However, they may be essentially described as having very round and full forms to the bodies, with a closely circumscribed back-slab, usually bordered by a band of round beads.

The early phase at Surjan Giri is, therefore, characterized by the full, rounded forms which we have come to associate with the early Pāla and pre-Pāla sculptures of the Brahmanical sects. The later phase (ca. 11th century) shows the human figure with more naturalistic proportions and a refinement indicative of the mainstream of Pāla sculptures after the union of the local Bihar styles with that of Sārnāth had been achieved.

### Gayā

In his report of his tour of the Patna-Gaya Districts in 1811-1812, Buchanan-Hamilton notes about the town of Gayā: "The Hindu places of worship are so numerous and of such celebrity that, terrified at the extent to which it must run, I commence the account with hesitation."<sup>32</sup> Even though more than one hundred fifty years have elapsed since that

<sup>31</sup> It would take a composite of several images to be able to put together what must have been the complete appearance of any one of them. For an illustration, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 112.

<sup>32</sup> Francis Buchanan-Hamilton, *An Account of the Districts of Bihar and Patna in 1811-1812*, [ed. John Francis William James], 2 vols. (Patna: Bihar and Orissa Research Society, [1936]), I:97. (Hereafter, *Bihar-Patna Report*.)

writing, very little additional knowledge is available to the present day scholar to add to his courage in discussing the important monuments in the vicinity of Gayā town. Today, Gayā is still one of the holiest places in India for Hindus and many sculptures and other antiquarian remains are kept in active worship, frequently in places which are inaccessible to non-Hindus and where photography may be prohibited even to those allowed to enter. Archaeological excavations have not been carried out since the region is heavily populated and is religiously vital to great numbers of people. Therefore, our present knowledge about the site is not in keeping with its actual importance in Indian history.

Although Gayā was probably continuously inhabited since at least the time of the Buddha in the 5th century B.C., it did not achieve eminence as a religious center until well into the Pāla period. Its importance at that time, however, was so great that it might well be considered the most prominent non-Buddhist center in Magadha during the Pāla period. An understanding of its religious and artistic developments could explain much about the relationship between Buddhism and Brahmanism during the Pāla period which eventually led to Brahmanical ascendancy. While ample documentation in the form of inscriptions attests to the building of numerous Brahmanical shrines and temples from the late 9th century on,<sup>33</sup> the reasons behind this upsurge remain less concrete.

Possibly, the importance of this site from approximately the 9th century to about the 12th, may be traced to two factors. The first is found in the *Gayā-Māhātmya*, an appended portion to the *Vāyu Purāṇa* believed to have been written in the 12th or 13th century,<sup>34</sup> but which presumably reflected an oral tradition of some few hundred years. This text describes a combat between Viṣṇu and the demon Gayā. The spot upon which Viṣṇu defeated this demon and the footprint left by Viṣṇu at that time are presently worshipped in the Viṣṇupāda temple at Gayā, which was built to commemorate this event. The second important factor is that the *Samhitās* "recognize Gayā as a place where the offering of *pindas* is gratifying to the manes."<sup>35</sup> Thus, *pindas* (alms food) may be offered to the *manes* (departed spirits) at this place with success, and thus one is able to pay one's debt to one's ancestors there. To this day, Gayā remains one of the holiest spots in India for this reason, but whether this reason or that of the emergence of the demon Gayā legends or some combination was actually responsible for the tremendous upsurge in religious (and consequently artistic) activity during the 9th-12th centuries remains to be seen.

It should be noted that a majority of the inscriptions in Gayā temples are dated in the Vikrama *Samvat* and most of them are from post-Pāla periods. Thus, although Patil claims that, with the onset of Muslim rule in the 12th century, Gayā's religious activities were diminished and did not rise again until the onset of Marāṭhā power in the early 18th century,<sup>36</sup> it appears that Gayā remained an active site once it was firmly established as a religious center. Undoubtedly, many of the images presently in worship at the town date from post-Pāla times, and until a thorough search of the monuments is done, it cannot be determined how great Pāla period activity was in comparison to later developments.

<sup>33</sup> See the list compiled from R. D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, in Sarasi Kumar Saraswati [sometimes spelled Sarasvati] and Kshitish Chandra Sarkar, *Kurkihar, Gaya and Bodh Gaya*, with "A Note on the Metal Images" by Stella Kramrisch (Rajshahi, 1936), pp. 32-33.

<sup>34</sup> See Buchanan-Hamilton, *Bihar-Patna Report*, I:98-99 for the legend. Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 127 assigns the date.

<sup>35</sup> Saraswati and Sarkar, *Kurkihar, Gaya and Bodh Gaya*, p. 31.

<sup>36</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 127.



Buchanan-Hamilton observed that, depending on the amount of money a devotee was able to pay, there were four established pilgrimage routes in the vicinity of Gayā town.<sup>37</sup> The most elaborate of these consisted of forty-five different holy places and could take as long as a few months to complete.<sup>38</sup> At the time of his writing, then, there were at least forty-five major shrines in Gayā and many additional minor ones. It is, therefore, quite surprising that so few images have made their way to museum collections since they must be numerous, in spite of the fact that religious activity in the area may keep them inaccessible.

A stone representation of the marriage of Śiva, Kalyāṇasundaramūrti, was collected from Gayā and serves to illustrate at least one phase of Gayā sculpture (Fig. 99).<sup>39</sup> From this image, we may project the possible stylistic idioms of the 9th century at Gayā. Although it does not find a precise counterpart among the known dated works of the Pāla period, the piece must be considered to fall somewhere between the style of the Hilsa Tārā from the reign of Devapāla in the mid-9th century (Fig. 33) and that of the representation of Vāgīśvarī from Nālandā which was made during the reign of Gopāla (II) in the mid-10th century (Fig. 49). In general, the shapes of the stelae in all three cases are similarly rounded, although the Vāgīśvarī, undoubtedly the latest of the series, bears a slight point at the top center. All of the images show softly modelled and rounded body forms and display the greater naturalism of the early Pāla period in contrast to the stiff, stylized forms of the 11th and 12th centuries. In the Gayā piece, the figures are still rather short in proportion, and are thus reminiscent of the pre-Pāla and early Pāla forms already discussed from Shahabad and Gaya Districts, but the high hair style of Śiva, elaborate jewelry with the distinctive collar-type necklace and the double incised lines of the drapery worn by the figures suggest a date at least in the mid-9th century.

The style of the Gayā piece is clearly part of the broad spectrum of Magadhan art, especially as found in Gaya District, as may be seen by comparison of the work to images found at nearby Bodh Gayā (Fig. 102) and other sites (Fig. 115).

Other sculptures from Gayā reveal that an active and continuous production of art during the Pāla period existed. Interestingly, most of the images which have come to my attention from Gayā are Buddhist, not Hindu, and thus the important Hindu developments which are known to have occurred remain enigmatic. In general, the Buddhist sculptures are very similar to ones found at nearby Bodh Gayā, to be discussed below. Possibly, they were made at this latter site and then transported. Again, it should be reiterated that the paucity of sculptures in this discussion does not reflect the true importance of the site.

### *Bodh Gayā*

Patil explains that the "name Buddha-Gaya occurs first in the apocryphal inscription of Amara-Deva and in Akbar's time it may have been the more commonly used name to distinguish it from Gayā which had by then grown to considerable sanctity and im-

<sup>37</sup> Buchanan-Hamilton, *Bihar-Patna Report*, I:103-4 and also see his list of places included in the four routes on p. 108 of the same volume.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, I:105.

<sup>39</sup> I have collected many photographs of images which are purported to be from the Gayā town area, but I am reluctant to include them since I feel that the term "Gayā" has sometimes been used in a very general sense in assigning their provenance.

portance after the decline of Buddhism. Abul Fazl mentions the latter place as Brahma Gayā obviously to distinguish it from the holy site of Buddhism."<sup>40</sup> Thus, hardly seven or eight kilometers apart, the two "Gayās" gained distinction as religious centers for decidedly different religions.

While the reasons behind the ascendancy of Gayā are still a matter of conjecture, the *raison d'être* for the fame of Bodh Gayā is well known. The numerous shrines and temples, including the celebrated Mahābodhi temple, are built in the vicinity of the spot upon which the Buddha achieved his enlightenment, thus commemorating the event as well as offering inspiration to devotees. Since the time of the Buddha, this site has been in active worship and, like Gayā, has not been scientifically excavated since it is still heavily worshipped today. The site, of course, has been the subject of numerous topographical surveys and archaeological reports made during the course of restoration to the Mahābodhi temple. However, scholars, such as Coomaraswamy,<sup>41</sup> have been mainly concerned with the early remains including the Vajrāsana and the stone railing, or, as in the cases of Cunningham<sup>42</sup> and Mitra,<sup>43</sup> have dealt largely with the architecture and environs of the Mahābodhi temple and the history of the site as known through literature, tradition and legend. Almost no mention is made of the artistic activity or importance of the site during the Pāla period, and yet, from the evidence of the numerous black stone images (including the present main image of the central shrine of the Mahābodhi temple), Bodh Gayā was a flourishing center of Buddhism during the Pāla period, inspiring both iconographic and stylistic forms throughout Bihar and eventually Bengal, as well as regions outside of India proper, such as China, Nepal, Tibet and Burma.<sup>44</sup>

During the 19th and 20th century restorations of the Mahābodhi temple and its environs, numerous black stone Pāla period sculptures were placed in the niches on the exterior of the temple and in subsidiary shrines, apparently without regard for their find places or what might have been their original positions. Thus, any iconographic program which might have existed during the Pāla period has been lost. It is likely that these sculptures were collected from the ruins of the many temples and monasteries in the vicinity of the main temple and therefore represent various workshops active at Bodh Gayā rather than a single atelier. It should also be noted that while Pāla period sculptures are numerous from this site, all of these are not necessarily representative of what may have been the most important images. Numerous icons made of bronze and other metals must have existed at Bodh Gayā by the evidence of what has been found at other major Pāla period sites, but none of these has yet been found. It is likely that the metal images were either destroyed or melted down during later periods, or if small enough, were carried away by devotees. Many of them are probably still at the site, awaiting the archaeologist's discovery. Thus, the materials which are available for study at the site today, as well as in

<sup>40</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 60. For the Amara-Deva inscription, see p. 67; also, Cunningham, ASR, I, p. 7; idem, ASR, III, p. 91; Beglar, ASR, VIII, pp. 58-59.

<sup>41</sup> Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *La Sculpture de Bodhgayā*, *Ars Asiatica*, XVIII (Paris: Les Editions d'art et d'histoire, 1935).

<sup>42</sup> Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*.

<sup>43</sup> Rajendralala Mitra, *Buddha Gaya, The Great Buddhist Temple, The Hermitage of Sakya Muni* (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1878; reprint ed., Delhi, Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1972).

<sup>44</sup> It is interesting to note that all four of these countries have "Mahābodhi" temples which were modelled after the one at Bodh Gayā and which apparently served as surrogates for it.

the Bodh Gayā, Patna and Indian museums in particular, must be viewed as only a small part of a much larger phenomenon.

In a religious sense, during the Pāla period, the importance of Bodh Gayā, the site of the Buddha's enlightenment, is perhaps comparable to the centrality of Sārnāth, the site of the Buddha's first preaching, during the Gupta period. This suggests that a new emphasis on the enlightenment as opposed to the preaching aspect of the religion accounts for this to some degree. This possibility is borne out by the fact that perhaps the most popular single subject in representations of the Buddha from the Pāla period is the Māravijaya, in which the Buddha is shown seated, generally under the leaves of the bodhi tree, with his right hand in *bhūmiśparśamudrā*, indicating the moment at which he attained the right to achieve enlightenment. In contrast, during the Gupta period the Buddha was most commonly represented in *dharmacakramudrā*. It would be difficult to judge whether the changing emphasis in the religion accounted for the shift in importance from Sārnāth to Bodh Gayā, or whether external factors causing an eastward movement into Magadha encouraged the religious change. Most probably, both factors played important roles. However, it will also be seen that with the rise of tantrism in the Buddhist religion, Bodh Gayā in turn became less of a focus to some schools of Buddhist thought, and other religious sites which nurtured the tantric ideas came into prominence. The most active period at Bodh Gayā under the Pālas thus comprised the 9th, 10th, and early 11th centuries, while during the late 11th and 12th centuries, tantric centers such as Nālandā and Vikramaśīla rose to artistic and religious prominence. The conservatism in accepting doctrinal change at Bodh Gayā may be partially due to the fact that Hīnayānists as well as Mahāyānists were active at the site during all periods. Those individuals or groups who were more interested in the avant-garde ideas of Buddhist theory were probably attracted to monasteries or universities which emphasized those ideas. Bodh Gayā, therefore, remained a major place of pilgrimage, important because of the event which it represented rather than its ability to keep abreast of current developments. Basically, then, it is possible to state that with the changing emphasis in Buddhism from the preaching to the enlightenment, Bodh Gayā became a favored center of Buddhism, but with the popularity of tantric or Vajrayāna theory, it competed with other centers as a primary focal point of religious thought. This is evident not only from the paucity of tantric material found there, but also from the abundance of tantric sculptures at places like Nālandā and Vikramaśīla dating from the period when Bodh Gayā's activity was already diminishing.

The conservatism ruling the iconography at Bodh Gayā seems also to have influenced stylistic development. The majority of sculptures at Bodh Gayā, even from the latest periods of development, fail to exhibit the many innovative features frequently found at other sites. For the most part, they do not show the sharply attenuated figures and accented poses, the elaborate ornamentation or the extreme detachment of the main figures from the back-slab found in some Buddhist sculptures of Magadha and many from Bengal. Rather, it appears that the "middle path" was observed in art as well as in religion.

The origins of Pāla style sculpture at Bodh Gayā were seen in several examples (Figs. 5-8, 17) and the stylistic impulses of Mathurā and Sārnāth were identified. In addition, the dated lintel from the reign of Dharmapāla (Fig. 27) exhibited evidence of what may have been a local Bihar style, perhaps developing out of central Indian modes. Numerous Brahmanical images from the pre-Pāla and early Pāla periods have been found at Bodh

Gayā, and exhibit what we have termed the early Brahmanical style. In general, they are strongly related to images found at nearby Gayā. While it is entirely possible that these images had been brought to the Buddhist site in modern times, the fact that they were collected without apparent effort from the vicinity indicates that the region around Bodh Gayā was in fact a part of the style complex extending from Shahabad District, into Patna and Gaya Districts, as has been discussed above. Many of the 8th-9th century sculptures found at Bodh Gayā show heavy reliance on the local developments, so that it may be supposed that with the increasing importance of Bodh Gayā, local carvers were called upon to execute the work which needed to be done.

Contact with this stylistic complex may be seen in a standing image of Viṣṇu (Fig. 100). The short, stocky figure relates clearly to figures seen at Āpsādh and Surjan Giri,<sup>45</sup> as does the general shape of the crown. Although related to such 7th century works, however, the Bodh Gayā sculpture was probably carved later, perhaps in the late 8th or even the early 9th century. The rather "sweet" demeanor of the earlier images is lost, and the relatively heavier jewelry and double-incised pattern of the dhoti suggest associations with early Pāla period works. In addition, the rather flatly incised pattern around the edge of the stele relates to later works (such as Fig. 101).

A second image of Viṣṇu (Fig. 101) was probably carved some twenty or thirty years later in the early 9th century, and while clearly derived from the previous type, exhibits features of Pāla sculpture from the reign of Devapāla. The figures of Viṣṇu and his attendants are now elongated compared to the earlier example, although still short and full compared to late Pāla developments. The facial features are reduced in size so that they achieve more naturalistic proportions to the rest of the face. Viṣṇu's crown has become higher and also attains the six-sided form characteristic of later Pāla representations. Added iconographic elements such as the *vidyādhara*s above or the lotus pedestals for the two attendants increase the overall complexity of the image and mark a movement away from the earlier types. The incised decoration of the rim of the stele is still present, but due to the added elements, earns less importance in the overall scheme.

The above two non-Buddhist examples found at the Buddhist site of Bodh Gayā show considerable dependence on the central Indian and local Bihar traditions. By the mid-9th century, the major stylistic strands, including the Buddhist Mathurā and Sārnāth traditions, as well as the central Indian forms, seem to have merged so that there is a notable lack of distinction between Buddhist and Brahmanical images in terms of style. A sculpture of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara from that approximate period demonstrates this quite well (Fig. 102). The stylistic similarity between this image and the Viṣṇu just discussed (Fig. 101) is easily seen in the representation of the shapes of the head-dresses, the faces, the tubular arms, the jewelry and the shapes of the stelae. In addition, both images are relatively simple compared to examples of this period from other sites as may be seen in the plain backgrounds of the stelae slabs. This simplicity is visible in a great number of works from the Bodh Gayā area; possibly, it was related to a practice of completing iconographic and decorative details in paint, rather than through carving, and may have been a local preference.

<sup>45</sup> See Figs. 94-96.

In contrast to the plainness of the preceding two works, the aesthetic which predominated in the sculptures dated in the reign of Mahendrapāla, the Pratihāra who invaded Bihar in the last decade of the 9th century, is also felt in the sculpture of Bodh Gayā. An over life-sized image of the Buddha in *bhūmiśpāṣamudrā* (Fig. 103) is similar in format to dated works from the reign of Mahendrapāla (Figs. 39-41), and probably dates from the late 9th or early 10th century. The "horror vacui" exhibited in this image is seen in each dated example from the reign of Mahendrapāla and seems to be characteristic of the aesthetic at that time. The Buddha, with his rounded facial features and body forms, resembles the late 9th century Mahendrapāla pieces<sup>46</sup> as well. The two Bodhisattvas attending this Buddha are similar in posture, head-dress and other features to 9th and 10th century examples that have been identified from Bodh Gayā (Fig. 104). Thus, while the figures in this stele clearly relate to previous traditions at Bodh Gayā, the tendency to fill every bit of space in the stele with iconographic and decorative elements seems to be a late introduction, perhaps coming with the Pratihāra conquest. There can be little doubt that this figure marks a distinct change from the previous Bodh Gayā sculptures with their markedly plain backgrounds.

Numerous figures of Bodhisattvas and female personifications have survived from around the 10th century, many of which exemplify what might be called a local stylistic idiom which occurred in the Gaya District at Bodh Gayā, Gayā, Kurkihār, and at numerous lesser known sites in the same vicinity. A typical specimen may be seen in a figure of Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 104). A distinctive characteristic of this type of image is the configuration of the head and head-dress, which appears to be very wide. The rather flattened face with its delicate features extending in a horizontal direction contrasts to what is to be seen at Nālandā where the facial features appear to bulge forth more prominently. Although the *jaṭāmukuta* hair style is quite high, the breadth and thickness of the head-band with the addition of rosettes at the broadest part diminishes the effect of height and adds to the feeling of a wide and flat form. It may be noted that this type of head-dress, especially the flowers behind the ears, becomes very popular in Tibetan bronze Buddha images of later centuries and quite likely, the Bodh Gayā images served as the model. The head-dress and hair find counterparts in dated images of the 10th century such as the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa (Fig. 50) and works from the reign of Mahīpāla I (Figs. 52-53). Also typical of these 10th century images is the treatment of the border of the back-slab. The late 9th-early 10th century seems to have been a kind of transition period at which time a flat, incised treatment of the garland, flame and other elements used around the halos or edges of the back-slabs occurs (Figs. 38-39, 42) side by side with the more three-dimensional twisted garland (Figs. 40-41). After this period, the twisted garland, along with an almost cloud-like flame motif, becomes standard, as seen in examples from the mid-10th century such as the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa (Fig. 50), or the late 10th-early 11th century such as works from the reign of Mahīpāla I (Figs. 52-53). The 10th century date of this particular type of image from the Gaya District may be suggested thus on the basis of its relationship to dated works of the 10th century.

An image of Tārā (Fig. 105) is also typical of many 10th century sculptures from Bodh Gayā, having the double motif along the border of the stele as in the above Avalokiteśvara. Though slender, her figure is not at all elongated and her face and facial features are

<sup>46</sup> See especially Figs. 39, 41.

broad, with the appearance of width increased by the placement of her earrings and portions of the head-dress. The necklace and armbands are similar to the ornaments worn by Avalokiteśvara, and those found on other images of that period. It may be noted that the face of this figure is painted with gold and that the features are outlined in black while red is used for the lips. Similar painting, along with the use of blue in the hair, is seen today at Bodh Gayā since these images are presently under worship by Tibetans who have painted the sculptures according to their ritual practices. Often, Tibetan traditions are based on Indian practices, and thus it is not impossible that this procedure was in fact prevalent at one time in India.

At present, the main image in the central shrine of the Mahābodhi temple is a large, black stone sculpture of the Buddha seated in *bhūmiśpāṣamudrā*, as would befit a shrine commemorating the event of his enlightenment (Fig. 106). There is considerable confusion as to whether this image is the one which served as the main icon in the past, however. One author claims that a black basalt sculpture which had been seen by Hsüan Tsang in 637 A.D. was later replaced by another image of the same material<sup>47</sup> indicating that a black stone figure was in use after the 7th century. When Dharmasvāmin visited Mahābodhi during the first half of the 13th century, he noted that the face of the main image in the temple was two cubits in height, that is, approximately one meter.<sup>48</sup> The present image is more than three meters in height and thus, the face might easily correspond to Dharmasvāmin's description since as a seated figure, the face might equal a large portion of the height of the sculpture. He also noted that the image had been saved from the destruction of the Muslims, who had already taken over the region at the time of his visit, by the construction of a wall across the entrance to the shrine.<sup>49</sup> In this way, the antechamber was converted into a temporary *garbhagṛha* and another image "which they did not mind falling a victim to iconoclastic fury"<sup>50</sup> was installed there. Thus, it is entirely possible that the black stone image, with a face two cubits in height, having escaped iconoclastic destruction is the present image in the shrine. Abraham reports that after the 16th century one of the Mahants removed this image to his compound (*math*) so that when Buchanan-Hamilton visited Bodh Gayā in 1831 he saw only a very crude clay image in the sanctum of the temple.<sup>51</sup> Shortly after this, a gilt stucco image was placed in this position by the Burmese and this remained in place so that Rajendralala Mitra saw it on his visit in 1863.<sup>52</sup> Later in the same century, at the request of Beglar and Cunningham, the black stone image which had been removed by the Mahant was brought back to its place in the shrine of the Mahābodhi temple.<sup>53</sup> Presumably, this image is the one illustrated here.<sup>54</sup>

If this carving indeed served as the main object of worship from the 10th century, it would have had influence far and wide as pilgrims and devotees came to this important Buddhist site, and carried back to their homes the memory of this image. Stylistically, it is

<sup>47</sup> Kuryan Abraham, *Bodh-Gaya* (Patna: Kitab Ghar, 1956), p. 17.

<sup>48</sup> Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, p. 67.

<sup>49</sup> Cunningham cites a similar story which was told by Hsüan Tsang with regard to Śāśāṅka, not the Muslims. See Cunningham, ASR III, p. 83.

<sup>50</sup> Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, p. xxxii.

<sup>51</sup> Abraham, *Bodh Gaya*, p. 17.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Cunningham says that the stone image measured only 5 1/2 feet (*Mahābodhi*, p. 54). This is surely too small, although I believe he is referring to the present image.

very clearly a part of the Bodh Gayā tradition as established above. The body is full and round, the limbs tubular. The face is also broad and the features are full. The torso is slightly elongated as compared to 9th century forms, but not as slender as the images of the 11th century to be discussed below. The Buddha sits upon a diaper patterned cushion which is found in a similar form on several other images from Bodh Gayā as well as a number from Nālandā. It should be mentioned that the pedestal beneath the cushion is divided vertically by pillars, which separate the depictions of a figure and animals. This configuration appears commonly among Pāla period representations at other sites in the Gaya District, most notably, Kurkihār (Fig. 117). Some authors have contended that this pedestal dates from the Gupta period, yet the depiction of forms, particularly the kneeling female in the center compartment, is so similar to other devotee-like figures of this approximate period (Figs. 50, 52-53), that it must be suggested that the pedestal is probably of the Pāla period, perhaps contemporaneous with the main image itself.

The late 10th-early 11th century at Bodh Gayā is documented by the dated representation of Buddha life scenes from the reign of Mahāpāla (I) (Fig. 54). The obvious similarities between the central figure in this piece with the main image of the Mahābodhi temple (Fig. 106) need not be discussed, although the main shrine image perhaps maintains a bit more of the fleshiness associated with the early Pāla period, thus suggesting a slightly earlier date for its manufacture.

Probably by the late 11th century, images of the Buddha wearing a crown or diadem and necklace were quite common at Bodh Gayā. A standing figure of a crowned Buddha is over 3 meters tall, and is presently located on the landing leading upstairs at the Mahābodhi temple (Fig. 107). Although the main figure is not particularly elongated nor slender, the two attendant Buddhas are quite attenuated and stand with a bend at the hip, suggesting ties to later Pāla period forms. The central Buddha is striking in its resemblance to the three dated crowned Buddhas from Kurkihār, also in the Gaya District, dating from the reign of Vīgrahapāla (III) (Figs. 69-71). These factors, and the pointed halos and complicated double lotus pedestals suggest a late 11th century date.

Another large image of a standing Buddha with life scenes is presently kept at the Mahant's Compound in Bodh Gayā (Fig. 108), and probably also dates from the 11th century. While the open space between elements in the stele is more akin to earlier examples at Bodh Gayā than the crowdedness of the previous example, the figure of the Buddha appears stiff and awkward and rather unlike other Bodh Gayā images. The small size of the feet and length of the torso contribute considerably to this effect. In addition, the face and head seem narrow compared to earlier sculptures. Normally, we might expect that the elements of the head-dress for a Bodh Gayā Bodhisattva or a crowned Buddha might seem to expand the apparent width of the head. Instead here the head seems almost compressed by the head-band being worn by the Buddha. The use of a diadem is apparently an iconographic, not stylistic feature, since the Buddha figures surrounding the main figure all wear the usual crown.

Several more substyles may be identified in bejewelled Buddha images from the Bodh Gayā region. One type (Fig. 109) is quite out of keeping with the stylistic developments which we have noted at Bodh Gayā, and yet since several images of this type have been found in the vicinity, it must be regarded as representative of a subtype. The figure is not at all elongated, nor is the overall effect of the stele as vertical as was the case in the two preceding examples. And yet, the pointed top of the stele as well as the deeply carved

motifs under the lotus pedestal of the Buddha suggest that the image is of a later Pāla date, or approximately the 11th century.

The majority of Buddhist images at Bodh Gayā represent either Buddha figures in a variety of postures and gestures (usually *bhūmisparśamudrā*) or depictions of the more popular Bodhisattvas (frequently Avalokiteśvara) and female personifications, such as Tārā. For the most part, the Bodhisattvas exhibit only two arms and generally might be considered conservative iconographic forms, considering the new developments which were occurring at other Buddhist monasteries during the Pāla period. Although crowned images of the Buddha are not uncommon from 11th century Bodh Gayā, most of these are clearly representations of the historical Buddha in his esoteric form rather than images of the Jina Buddhas. Excluding representations of crowned Buddhas, only a handful of images from Bodh Gayā exhibit what must be called tantric forms.

Because of its stylistic relation to the image of Vāgīśvarī dated in the first year of Gopāla's reign (that is, mid-10th century) (Fig. 49), an image of Trailokavijaya may be considered perhaps the earliest tantric figure yet found at Bodh Gayā (Fig. 110), perhaps dating from the 10th century. The details of the head-dress, shape of the body and treatment of the flame motif along the edge of the stele in particular must be considered products of a common stylistic milieu at approximately the same time. However, while this subject matter is seen frequently in metal and stone sculpture at other Buddhist sites in Bihar and Bengal, it is the only example yet found at Bodh Gayā. The similarity in style between this figure and the Vāgīśvarī from Nālandā as well as other images of Trailokavijaya from Nālandā suggests the possibility that this piece might have been done by a Nālandā artist, or might have been brought to Bodh Gayā from Nālandā.

A final example from Bodh Gayā is difficult to date simply because it lacks any distinguishing stylistic characteristics (Fig. 111). This tiny carving of a Bodhisattva, perhaps Mañjuśrī and his *prajñā* in *yuganaddha* pose, was probably a small devotional object for an initiate into a sect of esoteric Buddhism. Although it has been claimed by various authors discussing the Pāla period that figures in this position are very common, very few have actually come to light (I have found only a handful). Quite possibly, *yuganaddha* images were carried out of India by fleeing monks at the time of the Muslim invasions or were destroyed in the same onslaughts. But it is also likely that many of the teachings of these sects still remained in oral rather than written or sculptured form and, therefore, images of this type would not have been common. In any case, this figure is a vital document of Indian tantric Buddhism and probably dates from the 11th or 12th century.

The stylistic developments at Bodh Gayā initially arose out of the three main stylistic impulses that were defined in Chapter 2. Mathurā/Kuṣāṇa influence may have been felt prior to the Gupta period because Bodh Gayā was an important Buddhist site and must have been in contact with other Buddhist centers. Sārnāth and other Gupta influence must also have been felt directly for the same reason. During the post-Gupta/pre-Pāla period, local styles, perhaps developing out of central Indian modes, seem to have played an important role, as craftsmen were called upon to contribute to building activity. By the 9th century, the Bodh Gayā range of styles had clearly become amalgamated into a definable school. Throughout its development, Bodh Gayā remained a conservative stronghold, although a few examples of more radical style and iconography may be found.

*Kurkihār*

Although the hoard of metal sculptures for which Kurkihār is most famous was not discovered until 1930, this Buddhist monastic site was noticed as early as 1846 by Markham Kittoe, who returned there in 1848 and spent four days collecting ten cartloads of stone images, supposedly all Buddhist and many tantric in nature.<sup>55</sup> However, during the near century between Kittoe's collection and the discovery of the bronzes, Kurkihār was little noticed or explored. To the present, this important site has not been excavated despite its promise for bearing extensive material from the Pāla period. The high quality of the sculptures which have been found there, both in stone and in metal, suggest that excavation would indeed be fruitful and significant.

Aside from the fact that the scope and importance of Kurkihār remains hidden along with its various archaeological ruins, the positive identification of the site and its ancient name are still disputed points. Cunningham associated it with Kukkuṭa-pāda *vihāra* which had been mentioned by both Fa-hsien and Hsüan Tsang.<sup>56</sup> His basis for this identification is the association of a three-peaked hill several kilometers north/northeast of Kurkihār as the Cock's Foot Hills (Kukkuṭa-pāda) described by the two Chinese travellers, and upon which Kaśyapa attained *nirvāṇa*.<sup>57</sup> The modern name of Kurkihār could be a corruption of the old name.

Until thorough excavation is carried out, our only sources of knowledge of the site are the reports by early visitors (Kittoe, Cunningham and Stein in the 19th century and Sarkar and Sarasvati in the 1930s),<sup>58</sup> the topographical evidence including stray sculpture finds which are presently in worship at the village and finally, the sculptures, mainly in the Indian and Patna Museums, which are known to have been collected there. This latter category of material, however, is very poorly documented and much valuable information has been lost simply through careless record keeping. The Patna Museum collection consists primarily of the metal hoard of 1930 and these findings have been studied and records have been kept. However, the study of stone sculptures collected by Major Kittoe is beset by many problems. Apparently, Kittoe presented these ten cartloads of stone sculptures to the Asiatic Society of Bengal in December, 1848.<sup>59</sup> A list of the images, but no photographs or drawings, was published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in their journal.<sup>60</sup> At the time Anderson wrote his catalogue of the Indian Museum collection, he felt that most of the images had been correlated to the list and therefore were identified properly.<sup>61</sup> Today, however, it is not even known where all of the images are kept although many of them are in the Indian Museum.

While Kurkihār may indeed have had importance to the Buddhist religion from a very early period, as suggested by Cunningham, the sculptures unearthed thus far at the village do not seem to date from prior to the 9th century. Gradual changes in the sculptural style

seen in images found at Kurkihār parallel the developments documented in dated images of the Pāla period and suggest that either Kurkihār maintained an active workshop for several hundred years, from approximately the 9th-12th centuries, or that sculptures were constantly being brought in from other ateliers. Since the style is rather coherent among the Kurkihār examples, it may be suggested that a workshop did exist at the site, although it is clear that the images produced strongly relate to others being manufactured in the Gaya District, and in Magadha in general. Essentially, then, Kurkihār was a major art-producing site and kept abreast with other Pāla period artistic and religious developments. As suggested from the abundance of materials from this period, the 9th and 10th centuries seem to have been the most active for stone sculpture production, possibly reflecting the building of a number of temples at the site at that time.

Kurkihār images of the 9th century are easily identified by comparison to dated works of the reigns of Devapāla and Śūrapāla (I). For example, the rich foliation beneath the lotus seat of a representation of Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 112) and one of Tārā (Fig. 113) recalls that seen in the Tārā from Hilsa dated in the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 33). All three images are characterized by rather freely executed and exuberant forms, contrasting strongly with the stiff and more restrained versions of later centuries. All three figures wear similar quantities of jewelry. The two Kurkihār examples are further comparable in the manner of representation of the facial features, which still betray the very fluid forms of Gupta period art, seen especially in the curved outlines of the lips, and in the case of the male figure, in the eyes as well. The facial features and even the body forms are carved precisely, but overall, the pieces lack the crispness that is found at Nālandā around the same date (Fig. 128), thus revealing what may have been a local characteristic of the Kurkihār style.

A 9th century date may also be inferred for a representation of Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa (Fig. 114), which may be compared in style to the depiction of the same subject dated in the reign of Śūrapāla (I) (Fig. 34) and its companion piece, the Taming of Nālāgiri, also from the reign of Śūrapāla (I) (Fig. 35). The full form of the Buddha's body in the Kurkihār example, with its short and husky proportions, is unquestionably related to those of the Śūrapāla pieces, especially that of the Trāyastriṃśa scene. In addition, the lower rows of lotuses in these examples are also comparable. A number of distinctions, of course, also occur, and these may be explained by the fact that the sculptures were undoubtedly the products of different workshops. A particularly interesting aspect of the Kurkihār piece is the diaper pattern which occurs along the sides of the stele. Although it is in keeping with the type of patterns found in Pāla art, its precise counterpart is not commonly seen.

Tenth century images from Kurkihār are also easy to identify on the basis of comparison to dated works. In particular, the distinctive twisted garland and flattened flame motif which occurs so commonly in images from around the time of Gopāla II and Mahipāla I (Figs. 50, 52, 53), as discussed in relation to the art of Bodh Gayā above, is frequently used to outline the back-slab or the halo in stone sculptures, as seen in a representation of Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 115), one of the Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa (Fig. 116) and a seated Buddha in *bhūmiśpaśamudrā* (Fig. 117). The greater symmetry and regularization of the elements in these sculptures also signify a departure from the more freely-executed style of the 9th century. Further, the pudginess of the 9th century Buddhas is here replaced by a more slender, elongated form, especially

<sup>55</sup> Anderson, *Catalogue*, II:70.

<sup>56</sup> Cunningham, ASR, XV, p. 4.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>58</sup> Markham Kittoe, "Note on an Image of Buddha Found at Sherghatti, Etc.," *JASB* XVI, 1 (1847):78-80; idem, "Extract of a Letter from Capt. Kittoe, on Inscriptions, Etc.," *JASB* XVII (1848):234-36; Cunningham, ASR, XV, pp. 4-6; Marc Aurel Stein, "Notes on an Archaeological Tour in South Bihār and Hāzaribāgh," *Ind. Ant.* XXX (1901):85 ff.; Saraswati and Sarkar, *Kurkihār, Gaya and Bodh Gaya*, pp. 1-30.

<sup>59</sup> J. Anderson, *Catalogue*, II:70.

<sup>60</sup> Kittoe, "Extract of a Letter," pp. 234-36.

<sup>61</sup> J. Anderson, *Catalogue*, II:72.



visible in the contrasting depictions of the central figures in the two representations of the Descent (Figs. 114 and 116).

The stele showing Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 115) is of interest because of its striking resemblance to other Bodhisattva depictions found at Kurkihār, as well as at a number of sites in the Gaya District, such as Amethi, Aurel and Guneri. Interestingly, similar works have not been found at Nālandā or other sites in Patna District. One such example from Bodh Gayā has already been discussed (Fig. 104) and another will be treated below (Fig. 119). Although variations in facial type, details of jewelry and even stance occur among these images, their overall configurations are so strikingly similar that it must be assumed that such stelae achieved great popularity around the 10th century. It is difficult to surmise whether all were made by one group of artisans, for example, an itinerant group, or whether they were made in one workshop and later distributed, or whether they might indicate that the artists of various ateliers were in contact with each other and at certain times produced strikingly similar works. Undoubtedly, master drawings and even iconographic descriptions may have been used, accounting for some of the similarities, but the treatment of the head-dresses, costumes, perimeters of the back-slabs and other features are so similar that they must be the result of close stylistic associations.

Of the two Buddha images (Figs. 116 and 117), the seated example seems to be more distinctive of what may have been a specifically Kurkihār format. Several similar stone sculptures, some in situ at Kurkihār and others presently in museum collections, show the Buddha displaying *bhūmiśparśamudrā*, while seated upon a rather elaborate throne. A distinctive feature of the Kurkihār style seems to be the rather high base of the throne with its subdivisions into compartments, and the presence of animals and figures contained within. This type of base was also seen at Bodh Gayā (Fig. 106). The throne backs in general have *vyālakas*, while above, depictions of *stūpas* (as in this example) or Bodhisattvas (as seen in Fig. 118 from nearby Guneri) may appear. Generally, a large halo occurs behind the head of the Buddha. Thus, the overall impression is of a very detailed, elaborate stele, not unlike that seen in some cases at other Pāla period sites, but distinctive in particular because of the treatment of the throne base.

In contrast to sites like Nālandā and Bodh Gayā, where images of Brahmanical subject matter are found in significant numbers along with Buddhist ones, Kurkihār does not show evidence of having been a major producer of non-Buddhist images. The few Brahmanical pieces that have been found are primarily metal works. Actually, it is more problematic to explain the mixture one finds at other sites than it is to justify the predominance of Buddhist images at what was strictly speaking a Buddhist site, and thus this observation about Kurkihār should not be disturbing. The Buddhist images show a range of very traditional forms, encountered at other contemporary sites, although several apparently unique depictions, possibly the result of specific teachings at the site, also occur. One such example is the famous representation of Avalokiteśvara seated in a graphically portrayed cave.<sup>62</sup>

Kurkihār, then, whether or not it is in fact the Kukkuṭa-pāda *vihāra* mentioned by Fa-hsien and Hsüan Tsang, was obviously a place of religious and artistic importance during the Pāla period, particularly the 9th-11th centuries. A few examples of sculpture may be

dated to the 12th century on a stylistic basis, but these are in the minority, suggesting that the period of building and expansion at Kurkihār had ceased during the last phase of Pāla rule in Bihar.

### Guneri

The village of Guneri is approximately ten kilometers from Shergati in the southern portion of Gaya District. The site has been little explored although it is included in the reports of 19th century visitors<sup>63</sup> and it has never been thoroughly described. The various sculptures lying about, however, indicate that Guneri once hosted Śaiva temples as well as Buddhist *vihāras*. At the time of Kuraishi's report in 1931,<sup>64</sup> approximately seventy sculptures collected from Guneri were housed in a shed under government control, but some of these have been dispersed and are presently located in various museums in India. Others have been lost without ever having been properly studied. Many of the Buddhist images were inscribed although the only dated example thus far mentioned is the Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* from the reign of Mahendrapāla, the Pratihāra, discussed previously (Fig. 41). Since much of the Guneri material has been lost, it is not possible at this time to make a thorough evaluation of the sculptural developments at that site. Instead, a few carvings which clearly relate to images we have noted at other locations in the Gaya District will be discussed to demonstrate the wide currency of certain iconographic and stylistic types throughout the region.

Both the dated sculpture from Guneri (Fig. 41) and another representation of the Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* (Fig. 118) bear inscriptions which refer to the village of "Śrī Guṇacharita,"<sup>65</sup> in apparent reference to what is now the village of Guneri as the place of dedication. Unfortunately, the inscription of the second example does not include a date as well, but analysis shows that the two images, although similar in subject and configuration, were not made at the same time. The dated piece exhibits the rather crude style apparently in vogue during the reign of Mahendrapāla, the Pratihāra, in the late 9th century, while the second image is strikingly similar to examples of a slightly later date, the 10th century, from Kurkihār, such as the sculpture just discussed (Fig. 117). Both ultimately may derive from the style of works like the Tārā from Itkhauri, also dated in the reign of Mahendrapāla, especially in the crowdedness of the compositions and in their refinement. That they are of a slightly later date may be suggested from the presence of the distinctive garland and flame motif around the halo which, as has been demonstrated, became popular during the 10th century as documented by works like the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa from the reign of Gopāla (II) (Fig. 50) or the Bāghāurā Viṣṇu from the reign of Mahipāla (I) (Fig. 52). The resemblance of the Guneri Buddha (Fig. 118) to the one from Kurkihār, and others of this type from Kurkihār, indicates that they were both manifestations of a common style type prevalent throughout the Gaya region, and perhaps could have been products of a single workshop. The similarities go beyond the general iconographic configuration, but include the virtually identical treatment of the *vyālakas* at the sides of the thrones, the treatment of the halos, drapery, body of the Buddha and lotus

<sup>63</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, pp. 154-55.

<sup>64</sup> Muhammad Hamid Kuraishi, *List of Ancient Monuments Protected under Act VII of 1904 in the Province of Bihar and Orissa*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, LI (Calcutta, 1931), pp. 45-48.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 48.

<sup>62</sup> See Mallman, *Introduction*, pl. XIVb.



petals. The presence of seated Bodhisattvas above the cross-bars of the throne in the Guneri sculpture as opposed to the *stūpas* found in the Kurkihār piece is not a stylistic feature; examples from Kurkihār are known which have such Bodhisattvas, as was mentioned above. A major difference between the pieces is the architectural construct of the pedestal in the Kurkihār example, which seems to have been very popular at Kurkihār.

Other sculptures found at Guneri again form part of the style complex extending throughout the Gaya District in the 10th century. In particular, several Bodhisattva figures which are part of the same developments seen at Bodh Gayā (Fig. 104) and Kurkihār (Fig. 115) have been found at Guneri. One example shows Mañjuśrī Kumāra (Fig. 119). Although his necklace and head-dress are iconographically determined, other features of the image, such as the garland and flame edge of the back-slab, the lotus petals, the Bodhisattva's costume, stance and facial features leave little doubt that the images are of the same date and school. Since Guneri is so near to Kurkihār, and since Kurkihār was apparently much more of a center of Buddhism than Guneri, it is likely that the craftsmen who executed these works were located at or near Kurkihār and the finished sculptures were then distributed or sold to various other establishments. It is also possible that the craftsmen themselves were itinerant workers and travelled to different sites as building programs required their services at various times. In any case, the existence of strong contacts between sites in the Gaya District remains obvious and distinguishes several popular types of Buddhist images as belonging to that region.

#### Hasra Kol

About fifteen kilometers south of Kurkihār and slightly to the east of Bodh Gayā, the valley (*kol*) of Hasra bears the remains of a large Buddhist religious establishment. When Stein visited the place some time before 1901, he attempted to identify the nearby Shobhnath Hill as the Kukkuṭapādagiri that Cunningham associated with the modern site of Kurkihār.<sup>66</sup> However, this assertion is even shakier than that of Cunningham, who at least could infer that the modern name of Kurkihār was a possible corruption of the ancient name. The site itself has been well noted by previous scholars, although Keith's minor excavations there in 1907 may be considered the only attempt to really study this material. Numerous stone sculptures were found in the course of his digging and, subsequently, these became known as the Keith Collection when they were transferred to the Indian and Patna Museums. In most cases, the registries of these two museums have indicated the provenance of Keith Collection sculptures as well as numerous other finds from Hasra Kol as Viṣṇupur (or Bisanpur Tandwa) since many of the sculptures were kept at the adjacent village of Viṣṇupur prior to being distributed to the museums. The museum officials simply listed the provenance as the place which had been their last resting place.

A trio of large sized stone sculptures consisting of a central Buddha flanked by Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara was found at Viṣṇupur by J. D. Beglar in his tour of the site in 1872-1873 (Figs. 120, 121, 122), although he mentions that they had been carried off from Hasra Kol.<sup>67</sup> At that time, he also correctly noted that these images were probably some of

the finest of Magadhan sculptures. Besides their value as superbly executed sculptures, however, these works are of interest for several other reasons, for this trio of figures demonstrates that separately carved images were used to create iconographic units in Pāla sculpture. Other iconographic elements (for example, the bodhi tree that should probably exist above the head of the Buddha) might have been completed in paint on the ceiling or wall of the shrine in which the figures would have been placed. It is thus important to remember when we study individual sculptures, that we are possibly viewing only one portion of a greater whole.

In style, these three figures fall within the spectrum of 10th century Gaya District sculpture. The Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* (Fig. 121) bears distinctive resemblance to the Buddha in the main shrine of the Mahābodhi temple (Fig. 106), even to the patterned cushion upon which he is seated. It may be suggested that the Bodh Gayā image attained wide acceptance as the model to follow for Buddhas in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* of large size and importance and, therefore, that the resemblance is not merely coincidental. The two Bodhisattvas, Maitreya (Fig. 120) and Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 122) are also similar to types found at Bodh Gayā, perhaps resembling the two attendant Bodhisattvas to the Buddha in Fig. 103, which is slightly earlier, more than any representation of a single Bodhisattva than has been shown. These figures exhibit the same fleshy forms, broad and almost square faces, similar jewelry and garments as well as hair styles, and once again fall in step with our expectations of 10th century sculptures from the Gaya District, and particularly, those from Bodh Gayā.

#### Conclusions About Gaya District

During the pre-Pāla and early Pāla periods, the art of the Gaya District displayed a variety of stylistic sources, including influence from major Buddhist centers, such as Mathurā and Sārnāth, as well as more generalized central Indian forms. During this phase, ca. 7th-early 9th century, distinctions between Buddhist and Brahmanical formulations are also discernable. In part, these may arise from the fact that the Buddhist sites formed a kind of network and may have shared artists, or may have trained artists to work in particular modes, while, on the other hand, Brahmanical works may have had their sources in other Brahmanical works, especially from central Indian sites. By the 9th century, the separate style sources seem to have merged, and a recognizable set of Gaya District characteristics came to prevail in images, regardless of sectarian affiliation. Because of the availability of materials, the Buddhist art of Pāla period Gaya District is more well known. However, the sculptural traditions of Gayā, one of the most important Hindu cities in South Asia, remain to be discovered and studied, thus enabling us to assemble a more comprehensive and representative picture of the art of this ancient region.

#### THE PATNA DISTRICT

Adjacent to the Gaya District, the region comprising the Patna District played an equal role in the development of Magadhan sculpture during the Pāla period. Like the Gaya District, the Patna District encompasses several sites where the Buddha lived and preached and therefore it formed an essential part of the Buddhist holy land. Although ad-

<sup>66</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 164.

<sup>67</sup> Beglar, ASR, VIII, p. 105. It should be noted that R. D. Banerji (*EISMS*, p. 86) mistakenly says that Stein was the first to notice these in 1901. Beglar's report, however, was made in 1872-73.

ministratively and politically, the Patna and Gaya Districts were not separated during the Pāla period, in an artistic sense the two districts gave rise to slightly different developments. In the Gaya District, influential centers like Gayā, Bodh Gayā and Kurkihār transmitted a network of stylistic formulations that gained currency in the region. In the Patna District, other centers, such as Nālandā and Rājgir, served in the same way to create an effective sphere of influence. A discussion of some of the main art centers of the Patna District will clearly show this development of slight local differences from Gaya styles, and yet an overall unity of Magadhan art exists that will later be contrasted to the sculpture of Bengal.

### Nālandā

The actual site of what was once the flourishing Buddhist monastery of Nālandā encompasses an area of several square kilometers including the land upon which several modern villages such as Jagdiśpur and Bargaon are built. However, only a relatively small portion of this area has been excavated. This work was carried out primarily between 1915-1916 and 1937 and the material was published in the Annual reports of the Archaeological Survey of India for the appropriate years. More recently, excavations have been done since around 1975 but these finds remain largely unpublished. The Archaeological Survey reports are not art historical in nature and simply give accounts of the finds as they were discovered without attempting to arrange the objects in a chronological sequence. Other than these reports, a few minor articles and an epigraphic study of the inscriptions found at the site,<sup>68</sup> very little has been done to define the artistic developments at Nālandā except in the most general way. That the monastery in question is definitely Nālandā has been verified by the discovery of a number of clay seals at the site, inscribed with dedications mentioning its name. Also, the name Nālandā appears in the inscriptions of several sculptures such as dated image of Vāgīśvarī from the reign of Gopāla (Fig. 49) found at Kapatya village nearby.<sup>69</sup> The identification is also corroborated by literary references to its location as a "suburb" of Rājgir.<sup>70</sup> The Pāli texts take Nālandā to be the birthplace of the Buddha's disciple, Śāriputra.<sup>71</sup> Tāranātha relates that Aśoka gave offerings to the *stūpa* of Śāriputra at that site and erected a temple over it,<sup>72</sup> and further states that Nāgārjuna, the great Buddhist teacher, maintained five hundred teachers at Nālandā.<sup>73</sup>

While the tradition and history of Nālandā go back to the time of the Buddha, the excavations have only revealed foundations as early as the mid-5th century, although there is no reason to suppose that further exploration would not uncover earlier beginnings. During the reign of Harṣa (606-647) and the time of Hsüan Tsang's visit, Nālandā was a flourishing center of Mahāyāna Buddhism and a place which was famous far and wide. During the Pāla period, it underwent its most active phase, perhaps accelerated by the tolerance of Pāla emperors. Although he does not state his sources, Patil claims that this establishment was directly patronized by Devapāla, Gopāla II and Mahīpāla I.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and Its Epigraphical Material*.

<sup>69</sup> See the Appendix, no. 25.

<sup>70</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 301.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya, *Tāranātha's History*, p. 101.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., pp. 106-7.

<sup>74</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 303.

However, I am of the opinion that this idea has erroneously arisen from assuming that because these emperors' names were found on dated sculptures, seals or other epigraphs at that site, they necessarily reflect royal commissions.<sup>75</sup>

Even Tāranātha is strangely silent about Pāla patronage of Nālandā, although he refers liberally to other monasteries receiving their munificence. His mention of Nālandā under the Pālas includes the statement that Dharmapāla built Vikramaśīla monastery and appointed the chief of that center to look after Nālandā as well<sup>76</sup> and also that Mahīpāla (supposedly a son of Mahīpāla, but we have no record of him other than this) patronized Nālandā along with Somapurī (Pāhārpur).<sup>77</sup> An inscription found by Kittoe in about 1848 at Ghosrāwān states that a certain individual<sup>78</sup> was paid honor by Devapāla and was given a responsible post at Nālandā by him.<sup>79</sup> While this implies that the political ruler did indeed exert some type of power in the administration of the monastery, it in no way suggests that he gave monetary patronage. The only surviving evidence of really large scale patronage of Nālandā during the Pāla dynasty is that of a foreigner, although the emperor, Devapāla, carried out the proposals. This information comes from the copper-plate inscription found in monastery site # 1 in 1921 which states that Devapāla, acting as an agent for King Bālaputradeva of Suvarṇadvīpa, granted five village for the comforts of the *bhikṣus* and for the upkeep of the monastery at Nālandā.<sup>80</sup> These villages consisted of Nandivanāka, Mañivāṭaka, Naṭikā and Hastigrāma in the Rājgir subdistrict and Pālanaka in the Gayā subdistrict.<sup>81</sup> The inscription bears the date of the thirty-ninth regnal year of Devapāla and in addition contains a history of the Śailendra dynasty. Thus, although Devapāla may be credited with complying with the request made of him, he cannot be acclaimed for its instigation.

In spite of the confusion as to how much Nālandā was patronized directly by the Pālas, the fact remains that the site was a flourishing center of art and religion during the Pāla period, until around 1199. At that time, it is believed that it was destroyed along with nearby Uddandapura monastery by the invading Muslims.<sup>82</sup>

Although closely related to their Gaya District counterparts, Nālandā sculptures lean much more heavily on the traditions of Sārnāth. The reasons for this remain largely speculative, but from what we have seen in the developments of the Shahabad and Gaya Districts, art styles from central India exerted strong influence on the art traditions, even

<sup>75</sup> Dated sculptures from Nālandā include Figs. 28-30 from the reign of Devapāla, Fig. 49 from the reign of Gopāla (II), Figs. 55-57 from the reign of Mahīpāla (I). Seals bearing the names of Pāla emperors include ones mentioning Dharmapāla, Devapāla, and Nārāyaṇapāla. For these last three, see Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and Its Epigraphical Material*, pp. 43 (Dharmapāla), 40, 59 (Devapāla), 58 (Nārāyaṇapāla). In addition, the important copper-plate of the year 39 of Devapāla is from Nālandā (Sastri, pp. 92-103).

<sup>76</sup> Chimpa and Chattopadhyaya, *Tāranātha's History*, pp. 274-75.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 289.

<sup>78</sup> According to Chaudhary (*Select Inscriptions*, p. 11) and Patil (*Antiquarian Remains*, p. 147), the name of the individual was Viradeva. However, R. C. Majumdar (*History of Bengal*, I: 122) indicated that the individual's name was Indragupta. Majumdar corrected his statement in *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 116.

<sup>79</sup> Chaudhary, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 11; Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 147; R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:122; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 116.

<sup>80</sup> Hirananda Sastri, "Nalanda Copper-plate," pp. 310-27.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., pp. 324-25.

<sup>82</sup> The only eye-witness account of the destruction of a monastery is for Uddandapura (see p. 117 of this study). It is generally assumed that all of Magadha was destroyed at the same time and hence, Nālandā. However, Dharmasvāmin reported that on his visit to Nālandā in the early 13th century some activity still existed.

the Buddhist developments, in those areas. In the Patna District, and at Nālandā specifically, this was not so much the case. Instead, the Buddhist establishment seemed to look directly to Sārnāth (and perhaps to Gupta period Mathurā) as a model for both Buddhism and Buddhist imagery. Since Gupta foundations are traceable at Nālandā, the site might, in fact, be viewed as another Gupta site, which may have been in extensive contact with others of the period.

The 5th and 6th century trends influenced by the Sārnāth modes have already been seen in both stone and stucco at Nālandā (Figs. 10, 11, 13, 19). In addition, the central Indian influence has also been identified in the reliefs from the temple at Site 2, which probably are products of the 7th century (Fig. 24). In the 7th and 8th centuries, these various trends are still visible in the art, but by the 9th century, as happened in Gaya District, a synthesis occurred. At Nālandā, however, the Buddhist Gupta style source of Sārnāth especially seems to have greatly influenced the later developments at the site.

A strikingly handsome representation of a Bodhisattva, whose identity is variously given as Avalokiteśvara or Samantabhadra,<sup>83</sup> exemplifies the persistence of Sārnāth forms at Nālandā (Fig. 123). While an earlier example of sculpture from the site (Fig. 11) is so close to Gupta models that it might almost be mistaken for a work from a major Gupta center, such as Sārnāth, the unidentified Bodhisattva (Fig. 123) must be seen as a product of an eastern Indian atelier, although it is heavily inspired by the works of the Sārnāth tradition. The refinement of the carving, the slender, graceful main figure, the hair style and the size relationship between the head and the figure of the Jina in the head-dress and even the deeply carved foliage at the base of the lotus stem are all reminiscent of works based on Sārnāth style images, such as Fig. 11. However, the unidentified Bodhisattva must be slightly later in date, perhaps a product of the 7th century. In contrast to the facial features of the earlier piece, with the full lips and droop in the center of the upper eyelid, the later piece seems more to resemble post-Gupta Magadhan forms. Further, the unidentified figure wears more prominent jewelry, again suggesting a slightly later date of manufacture. The later piece may be further compared with the representation of Siddhaikavīra Mañjuśrī from Bihar province (Fig. 12), which dates from the same approximate period. In particular, the female attendants in both images are strikingly similar. The similarity of these two sculptures suggests that the Siddhaikavīra Mañjuśrī might in fact have been a product of a Nālandā workshop.

A 7th century date might also be suggested for several other stone images found at Nālandā, although in contrast to the elongated, slender form of the preceding figure (Fig. 123), these images reveal a shorter, fuller body type. Examples of this type include a representation of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī Kumāra (Fig. 124) and one of Vajraśāradā, a form of Sarasvatī (Fig. 125).<sup>84</sup> At least one other image of this style type is the famous seated male figure with a snake canopy, variously identified as a *nāga* king or alternately as Nāgārjuna.<sup>85</sup> This latter image bears an inscription whose characters have been assigned to the 7th century on paleographic grounds,<sup>86</sup> and while Asher assumes that the image

style suggests a later date for the piece,<sup>87</sup> a 7th century date can easily be justified for the sculpture and others of its type. The attendant figures in the Vajraśāradā image, for example, betray their still close alliance with sculptural modes of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. The curls of the hair of the figure at the bottom left, for example, are strongly reminiscent of the elaborate coiffures seen in Gupta art. Gently modelled bodies, highly expressive facial features including very naturalistic lips and very exuberant carving of the details, such as the foliate motifs beneath the figures, also recall Gupta trends. It is highly unlikely that such an image could be assigned a date later than the 7th century, for as has been shown, by the 8th century, the deeply undercut, softly modelled forms of the Gupta tradition had largely disappeared. The image of Mañjuśrī Kumāra (Fig. 124) shares a number of stylistic features with the Bodhisattva discussed above (Fig. 123), although at first glance, the different proportions of the two central figures seems to dispel this notion. In part, Mañjuśrī Kumāra's somewhat stunted body proportions may be explained iconographically, since he is, by definition, a youth, but clearly, stylistic factors are also at play here since the rounded, full forms of his face and body resemble those of Vajraśāradā and the "*Nāga-Nāgārjuna*" figure mentioned above. Strong points of comparison between the two Nālandā Bodhisattvas include the treatment of the lotus pedestals upon which the figures stand (although the lower, down-turned row is missing in the Mañjuśrī Kumāra image), the similar treatment of the foliate motifs of the lower part of the flowers held in the Bodhisattvas' hands from the point of view of depth and vigor of carving, although not specific motifs, the plainness of the halos and the configuration of the halos as they are set above a free-form shape which contrasts to the unified back-slab so common in later images. It might be postulated that the central Indian emphasis on the fuller body, which was so amply in evidence in the Shahabad and Gaya Districts, might be at play here, although highly refined, perhaps through the influence of the Sārnāth style, which was so vital at Nālandā. The image of Vajraśāradā might be compared to that of Kumārī from Saraikela (Fig. 25) whose style was partially explained by central Indian modes. The crispness and refinement of the Nālandā carving, however, distinguishes it from its more provincial counterpart.

Numerous images not conforming to the Sārnāth stylistic precepts have been found at Nālandā and many of them are presently in worship in small temples in the several villages which have sprung up within the actual boundaries of the Nālandā site. Virtually without exception, these images are representations of Brahmanical rather than Buddhist subjects and therefore fall entirely in keeping with what we have termed the pre-Pāla or early Pāla Brahmanical style in Bihar.

One example shall suffice as an illustration of this, an image of Sūrya in worship at Bargaon (Fig. 126), which may be related to the Sūrya from Apsādh (Fig. 94) and the Sūrya from Surjan Giri (Fig. 96). These figures are similar in body proportions, in the manner of dress, the style and shape of the crowns, the method of tying the sash at the waist and the treatment of the attendant figures, to a certain degree. Although the images are clearly not from the same atelier, undoubtedly they are all manifestations of a broad stylistic spectrum current at the same approximate time, around the 7th century. The floral band along the perimeter of the stele in the Nālandā piece may be considered a local

<sup>83</sup> For a discussion of the problem of identification of this figure, see Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 81. A key to the identity of the figure may have been an object pinned to the hole in the lotus held in his left hand.

<sup>84</sup> For discussion of the iconography, see *ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>85</sup> For an illustration, see *ibid.*, pl. 168.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

version of the flat, incised motif seen so frequently in Shahabad and Gaya Districts in the late 7th and 8th centuries, even continuing into the 9th century.

As we have seen at other sites in Magadha, by the time of Devapāla in the middle of the 9th century, the Sārnāth tradition and the local Bihar tradition had so modified each other that a stylistic synthesis had occurred. At Nālandā, this may be demonstrated clearly by a number of examples. But in addition, it will be noted that the synthesis at this site was in many ways different from that seen at other places. Thus, a "Nālandā school" may be identified as distinct from other local developments.

A representation of a standing Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 127) may be cited as an example of the stylistic blend of the mid-9th century, as well as a demonstration of the distinctiveness of the Nālandā modes, compared to those of other artistic centers. When compared to representatives from its ancestral lines, such as Figs. 123 and 126, the blend becomes apparent, although in some ways undefinable. The two "parent" pieces have more points of contrast than comparison between them, and yet the 9th century Avalokiteśvara shares characteristics of each. The mid-9th century date may be ascribed by comparison to the example which is probably from the reign of Devapāla, also from Nālandā, but in this case a metal rather than stone image (Fig. 30). The most notable points of comparison are the shapes of the bodies, the jewelry, the stance of the figures, and to some extent, the treatment of the head-dresses.

Contrast to the Gaya District images of the same period may be seen in relation to the standing Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara from Bodh Gayā (Fig. 102). While the stance, attributes and attendants are largely matters of iconography, differences of facial features, body forms and treatment of clothing and jewelry arise from local stylistic preferences. Thus, while Avalokiteśvara wears a *jaṭāmukuta* in both cases, the execution of the hair style differs slightly. In the Nālandā sculpture, it seems to fall more softly and less stiffly, and the shape of the piled hair is less flattened. The thick head-band makes the face in the Bodh Gayā example appear broader. Also, the typical addition of the flowerettes behind the ears at Bodh Gayā is absent in the Nālandā piece, again reducing the effect of the width of the face and head. The jewelry as well may be distinguished, especially in the ornaments worn around the neck. While the heavy and stiff collar necklace was a frequent feature of Bodh Gayā and other Gaya District images, at Nālandā, the Bodhisattva wears more delicate ornaments. Other details, such as the treatment of the garments, may be noted although the variance of these elements even at a single site suggests that they are not always good indications of regionalism. The facial features also provide insight into some of the contrasts between the artistic styles of the major contemporaneous centers. At Bodh Gayā, the facial features frequently appeared as if they were flattened and widened as they were set into a flat and broad face. At Nālandā, however, the features have much more individual shape to them and in many cases (especially on the bronzes) play a dominant role in the rather pointy configuration of the head and face.

A representation of Queen Māyā giving birth to the Buddha (probably part of a set of life scenes) further suggests what the mid-9th century Nālandā stone sculpture styles might have been (Fig. 128). The facial features and the fleshy quality to the face and body show close relation to the previous image of Avalokiteśvara. While a *tribhaṅga* posture is not unusual for images of Māyā giving birth, the relaxed, yet animated pose in this representation is associated with the Nālandā workmanship. The details of the hair, head-dress, jewelry and, in a general sense, even the garments, recall those of the Tārā from

Hilsa, dated in the reign of Devapāla, or mid-9th century (Fig. 33). Such similarity is hardly surprising since the inscription on the Hilsa Tārā<sup>88</sup> indicates an association with Nālandā. The depth of carving seen in both of these images provides an animated and lively surface to the sculpture, and yet differs significantly from the type of detachment from the back-slab seen in the 11th and 12th century Pāla images. The difference lies primarily in the fact that the central deity is not alone in its separation from the back-slab, but rather, all of the various iconographic elements as well are carved in deep relief. The Nālandā stele has a precision of execution and a carefulness in the spacing of elements which give the overall impression of a very "neat" and well thought-out representation. This feature, in fact, remains a common denominator at Nālandā throughout its artistic development.

The relationships between the sites of Nālandā and Bodh Gayā may be studied further by comparing a black stone image of a Buddha in *bhūmiśparsamudrā* from Nālandā (Fig. 129) with the main image of the Mahābodhi temple (Fig. 106). Although minor differences, such as the relative fleshiness of one figure or the other, indeed exist, the similarities between the images override the differences. Other images, such as the Buddha from Hasra Kol or Viṣṇupur (Fig. 121), might also be seen as belonging to the same general type and period, ca. 10th century. It may be suggested that in spite of what may have been regional and local differences, certain iconographic types had wide currency throughout the entire Bihar region. Possibly, the Mahābodhi image itself would have served as a kind of prototype for others of the same subject, as being at the site of the great event being depicted, it would have been the example *par excellence*.

In the case of the seated Buddhas just discussed, few added embellishments exist, such as jewelry, attributes, hair styles, head-dresses, etc., which would allow further refinement of stylistic analysis. However, when given other elements to carve, the craftsmen produced distinctive results. The Buddha figure and even the lotus petals beneath him in another representation from Nālandā (Fig. 130) are extremely close to those in the preceding example and the piece probably dates from the same approximate period, the 10th century. In some respects, it is also similar to images from Bodh Gayā. However, the detailed back-slab is completely unlike contemporaneous images we have noted from the Gaya District. Here, the tendency to create more deeply carved and animated surfaces seen at Nālandā even in 9th century sculptures<sup>89</sup> is again visible. Instead of simply incising the decorative motifs of the cross-bars and uprights of the throne, portions are actually cut away so that the decoration stands in relief against a flat ground. This preference for sculptural rather than linear form may be seen in other elements of this image as well, and contrasts to the general tendencies noted at Bodh Gayā for flattened and more linear forms.

Some stylistic advancement in the treatment of the Buddha figure may be seen in the very large stele presently at Jagdiśpur, a small village on the outskirts of the Nālandā site (Fig. 131). In this case, the Buddha's body is less fleshy, more taut in appearance, suggesting, perhaps, ties to works of the late 10th, or even early 11th century, such as the dated Buddha life scenes sculpture from the reign of Mahīpāla (I) (Fig. 54). Iconographically, the Jagdiśpur image is one of the most interesting of those representing

<sup>88</sup> See the Appendix, no. 12.

<sup>89</sup> For example, Fig. 128.

the eight major life scenes of the Buddha from the Pāla period since it is very complete, with each scene providing clues to its identification in quite explicit terms. The central Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* is clearly a reference to the Māra *darśana* aspect of the enlightenment as the armies of Māra are shown attacking the firmly resolved Buddha.

Numerous miniature stone images have been found at Nālandā, and at other Pāla period sites, along with the more monumental ones. Often, they measure less than 10 cm. in height. Sometimes, they are remarkably detailed and depict scenes or subjects as completely as stelae many times their size. In general, they seem to follow the same stylistic patterns seen in more monumental imagery. Thus, a representation of a Buddha in *pralambapadāsana*, probably Maitreya, from Nālandā (Fig. 132) easily fits within the stylistic parameters of the 10th century. As in other Nālandā works, there is a general tendency towards expressing forms in three-dimensional terms, so that the overall effect is livelier and has less open space than images from other sites. And yet, as in the case of nearly all sculptures from Nālandā, there is a distinctly ordered appearance with little effect of crowding. This characteristic, in fact, separates the Nālandā forms from those frequently found in Bengal in which the use of relief for details often will be found to create a crowded, busy effect.

An image of a standing Buddha from the mid-to-late 10th century may be one of the earliest diademed Buddhas from Nālandā (Fig. 133). Although the proportions of the figures are less monumental than those of the 9th and 10th century images already described, the sculpture bears distinct resemblance to others of this period from Nālandā. Specifically, it may be compared to the dated image of Vāgīśvarī from Nālandā, dated in the first year of the reign of Gopāla (II) (Fig. 49), ca. mid-10th century. The decoration of the back-slab with the deeply carved flames along the outer edge is an obvious similarity. Probably more important, however, is the distinct resemblance between the hair style, head-dress and jewelry worn by the Buddha and Vāgīśvarī, despite the difference in iconography. The arm-bands and necklaces worn by the two figures are more similar than simple coincidence of provenance could explain. The same may be said for the coiled hair-dos, the earrings and even the pleated ribbon flowerettes behind the ears. In addition, while the face of Vāgīśvarī is certainly much fleshier than that of the Buddha, the formation of the features is essentially similar. This Buddha then, while retaining some of the features of the relaxed Bodhisattva forms of the 9th century and differing from the trend for Buddha figures just outlined, may be ascribed to the 10th century.

More typical of the crowned or diademed Buddha type at Nālandā, however, is an image presently in worship at a small temple in Bargaon village (Fig. 134). This sculpture probably dates from the 11th century on the basis of its resemblance to dated works of the reign of Mahīpāla I, and, to some extent, those of the reign of Vīgrahapāla III. The shape of the stelae is basically similar to that of the dated Gaṇeśa from the reign of Mahīpāla (I) (Fig. 53), while the Buddha and his ornamentation recall the metal images from Kurkihār of the reign of Vīgrahapāla (III) (Fig. 69-71). The diapered cushion upon which the Buddha sits ties the image to works of the 10th century (Figs. 106, 121),<sup>90</sup> yet the pointed halos of the subsidiary figures suggest a date in the later Pāla period. Typical of the Nālandā idiom, the elements of the sculpture are tidily arranged and perfectly carved.

<sup>90</sup> The diapered cushion seems to have been a popular feature of mid-to-late Pāla seated Buddha sculptures. See also Fig. 139.

An example of late 11th century carving at Nālandā is a now headless image of a bejewelled, probably originally crowned, Buddha (Fig. 135). The very floriated and elaborately carved lotus petals are directly comparable to those of the Naulāgarh image dated in the twenty-fourth regnal year of Vīgrahapāla (III) (Fig. 73), and also to those in the image of Tārā dated in the second or third year of Rāmapāla (Fig. 74), both of the late 11th century. The lower portion of each of these sculptures has a deeply carved inhabited vine scroll and the later Pāla intricacy is seen in various other elements of the sculptures. The torso of the Buddha is now much elongated compared to the 9th and 10th century types. Unfortunately, the head as well as the back-slab of this image are lost and cannot provide more information about the 11th century formulations.

Depictions of crowned or diademed Buddhas occur commonly after the 10th century although the unadorned form of the Buddha does not become obsolete. A figure of a Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* also dates from the late 11th century on the basis of the similarity of its lotus seat and the representation of the body to the previous example, and yet he is shown without crown or necklace (Fig. 136). This sculpture is presently located at Surājpur, a small village near Bargaon, but may have originated in the same workshop as the previous example on the basis of the similarity of forms. The snailshell curls of the Buddha's hair and even his facial features are more delicate than 9th and 10th century forms, and coupled with the slender body, the Buddha has a much less massive appearance than his predecessors.

A standing figure of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara from Nālandā (Fig. 137) is so similar to the Tārā dated in the second or third year of the reign of Rāmapāla (Fig. 74) in the late 11th century as to suggest that the two might have been executed in the same workshop and might even have been part of a set of images, a suggestion supported by the fact that they are nearly the same size. Not only are the shapes of the pointed stelae alike, but the outer rim of flames, the detailing of the lotus petals, the depiction of the cloth garments of the main figures and the *tribhaṅga* postures are also worthy of comparison. Both sculptures have a sleek appearance and delicate, refined detailing throughout. Since the image of Tārā was found at Tetrāwān, hardly a few kilometers from Nālandā, it is entirely likely that they were done at the same time and by the same artisan group.

However, that different workshops flourished at the same time and gave rise to distinct substyles may be demonstrated by another figure of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara, which is virtually identical to the previous figure in terms of iconography (Fig. 138). This image is presently enshrined at a small temple in Surājpur village. While it is undoubtedly a product of the same period as Fig. 137, or perhaps slightly later, that is, the late 11th or early 12th century, on the basis of general features such as the shapes of the stelae, the elongation and slenderness of the figures, the intricately carved details of the lotus petals and the attributes, the differences of individual style may be seen in the depictions of the necklaces, head-dresses, the variation on the *jaṭāmukuta* hair styles, the earrings, girdles and sashes. Indeed, this comparison makes it evident that it is possible not only to categorize sculptures from the Pāla period according to chronology, region and site, but eventually perhaps even to define specific workshops.

The above sequences have given only a minimal outline of the developments of style at Nālandā. The tremendous variety of iconographic forms discovered among the sculpture from that site would merit analysis beyond the scope of this study. Images of *krodha kāya* deities and other tantric forms are numerous, but due to their iconographic complexity,



they are frequently unsuitable for stylistic description, and thus I have excluded them from this discussion. Also, the wide range of sizes for carved images, from only a few centimeters to several meters in height, necessitates that the above discussion has been selective, since size and certain stylistic features (amount of detail possible, for example) frequently are interrelated. In general, Nālandā sculptures developed out of a heavy dependence on Sārnāth school prototypes. Throughout the Nālandā development, there was a greater proclivity for three-dimensional forms than seen at Bodh Gayā and perhaps a greater tendency towards elaboration as well. The Nālandā craftsmen were more bold in their acceptance and perpetuation of a wider range of iconographic forms than were Bodh Gayā artists. A consistently high quality of workmanship also distinguishes the Nālandā sculptural development at all times.

### Rājgir

The town of Rājgir is approximately ten kilometers south of Nālandā and, as has been mentioned, Nālandā was even sometimes considered to be a suburb of Rājgir.<sup>91</sup> Although its importance as a Buddhist and Jain site existed at least since the time of the Buddha and Mahāvīra, surprisingly few remains from the Pāla period have been discovered, and indeed, it seems curious that with Nālandā and other main Magadhan centers nearby, Rājgir has revealed little evidence of an active school of sculpture during the Pāla period. As might be expected, however, the few sculptures which have been found strongly reflect the styles described at Nālandā and may even have been products of the same workshops. Unfortunately, all of the Pāla period sculptures from Rājgir or the Rājgir vicinity that have come to my attention are from the late Pāla period and I am unable to make judgements about what might have been the earlier developments.

A single example will suffice to demonstrate Nālandā's artistic influence at nearby religious centers. This image, a seated Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* (Fig. 139), was found at Hassanpur village, Rājgir, but in the treatment of the torso, the cushion beneath the figure and the lotus petals, it is indistinguishable from a number of Nālandā pieces (Figs. 134-136), of about the 11th century. Of course, at present it is not possible to determine whether a workshop under the influence of Nālandā carvers produced this work or whether the piece itself had been made at the more renowned site. In either case, the survival of such sculptures at Rājgir and other sites in the vicinity of Nālandā suggests that Nālandā served as a major artistic paragon throughout the Patna District.

### Uddanāpura (Bihār Sharīf)

The identification of the ancient Buddhist monastery of Uddanāpura with the modern town of Bihār (Bihār Sharīf) has been substantiated by local tradition and literary evidence, as well as inscriptions. Perhaps one of the most convincing of these is the epigraph on the metal image of Pārvaṭī dated in the fifty-fourth regnal year of Nārāyaṇapāla (Fig. 43) which suggests that it was dedicated at Uddanāpura.<sup>92</sup> Since it was found at Bihār Sharīf, it has been accepted that the modern town is built on the ancient site.

Uddanāpura *mahāvihāra* was not founded until well after Nālandā and many other Buddhist *viḥāras* were well established. Supposedly, it was begun by Gopāla, the founder of the Pāla dynasty itself.<sup>93</sup> This event must have occurred some time before 749 A.D. because, according to Tibetan history, the first Tibetan Buddhist monastery of Sam-yaś in Tibet was built on Uddanāpura's model in that year.<sup>94</sup> Presumably, the Indian *viḥāra* had achieved some stature by that time. This important information implies that Gopāla's accession may have been early in the 8th century, as suggested in Tables II and III (Chapter 3).

From the extensive remains at Bihār Sharīf as well as Tibetan historical accounts, Uddanāpura must have achieved great acclaim. Many of the most famous Pāla period monks studied at this establishment, including Atīśa (Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna).<sup>95</sup> Dutt suggests that the monastery began its decline towards the end of the 11th century, on the basis that a statement in a hymn composed by Atīśa's Tibetan disciple Nag-tsho mentions Uddanāpura as having only fifty-three monks.<sup>96</sup> The final destruction of Uddanāpura took place in the last decade of the 12th century with a raid by the soldiers of Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī.<sup>97</sup> This devastation is of interest since it is the only one in the Magadha area for which an historical account exists. An eye witness to the destruction later told his version of the attack in 1243 A.D. to the Persian historian Minhāj, who included it in his work *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri*.<sup>98</sup> On the basis of this account, it has generally been accepted that all nearby Buddhist establishments, such as Nālandā and others, were also attacked and destroyed at the same time although archaeological and other evidence have not yet verified this assumption.

In spite of the extensiveness of the ruined monasteries at Uddanāpura, very little can be said at present about the development of stone sculpture there. The main problem has been the great confusion generated by the lack of accurate documentation of the Broadley collection. It is known that most of the images collected by him came from the Patna District and many of them specifically were found at Bihār Sharīf. However, the indiscriminate use of the term "Bihar" by museum officials in recording the provenance of the Broadley sculptures has made it difficult for the scholar to determine whether the town of Bihār or the entire region is intended. Thus, while the photograph album published by Asher<sup>99</sup> identifies thirty-six of the Broadley images, it hardly makes a dent in the 686 sculptures which originally belonged to Broadley's collection, and identifies only a few from Bihār Sharīf itself.

<sup>93</sup> This statement appears frequently in general historical discussions of various Pāla rulers, but I have not been able to determine if this is based on later tradition, inscriptions, etc. I am therefore accepting this judgment with reservation and I would not be surprised to find that the monastery was founded at an earlier date.

<sup>94</sup> Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1962), pp. 354-55. Dutt got this information from *Pag-sam-jon-zang*, pt. II, and refers to Sarat Chandra Das, ed., *Pag Sam Jon Zang by Sumpa Khan-po Yeśe Pal Jor* (Calcutta: Presidency Jail Press, 1908), p. 171. Also see the discussion above, p. 45.

<sup>95</sup> S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks*, p. 356.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. See also Roerich, *Blue Annals*, I:243, n. 2.

<sup>97</sup> See above, p. 109 and n. 82.

<sup>98</sup> S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks*, p. 357.

<sup>99</sup> Asher, "Former Broadley Collection," pp. 105-24. It should be noted that while I accept the identifications made on the basis of the photograph captions, I am not convinced that Asher has always succeeded in matching Indian Museum sculptures with Broadley's written descriptions since, in some cases, this leads to a discrepancy with provenance listings in the Museum itself. While it is possible that the Museum provenances are incorrect, the matter still has to be cleared before the attributions may be wholly accepted.

<sup>91</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 301.

<sup>92</sup> See the Appendix, no. 19.



Therefore, until the problem of provenance of these many images may be determined, this study must necessarily deal with only those few images which have been certified as coming from Bihār Sharīf, since our purpose is to establish accurate guidelines for regional and local developments. The few examples known to be from Bihār Sharīf are, therefore, not to be thought of as being necessarily typical of the material at the site, as is more the case in our discussion of Nālandā, Bodh Gayā and other sites. Instead, they must be considered meagre links with other traditions in Magadha and only incomplete clues to what may have been the main developments.

Several images from Uddanāpura have already been discussed because of the dated inscriptions which they bear. These include the two dated in the third or second year of the reign of Śūrapāla (I) (Figs. 34-35), the preaching Buddha from a small village just near Bihār Sharīf dated in the fourth year of Mahendrapāla's reign (Fig. 39), the metal image of Pārvaṭī from the fifty-fourth year of Nārāyaṇapāla (Fig. 43), and the stone image of Pārvaṭī found on Bihār Hill and dated in the third regnal year of Madanapāla (Fig. 78). Thus, while a general framework for chronological developments at the site exists, very few images may be used to fill out the bare outlines (a very ironical occurrence, to say the least).

The two dated pieces from Śūrapāla's reign, approximately the mid-9th century, fall in step with other images that we have recognized from the Patna District. Compared to representations from Nālandā, these sculptures appear less carefully arranged and more freely executed and yet the deeply carved surfaces suggest relationship to Nālandā forms. The figures perhaps best compare to the Tārā from Hilsa, also in the Patna District, dating from the same approximate period (Fig. 33). Once again, the deeply carved and lively surfaces of the images are worthy of comparison, and the same free execution of forms is seen in each example. The use of columns supporting an arch in the Tārā image is similar to the columns supporting the trilobate arch in the Buddha figures in compositional effect. This feature is also seen frequently at Nālandā and other Patna District sites, although it does not seem to occur in the Gaya District with any regularity. Other elements, such as the lotus petals in Fig. 34, compare to elements of the Hilsa Tārā and reiterate the probability that images at Uddanāpura were part of the mainstream of Patna District trends.

The Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā* from the fourth year of Mahendrapāla's reign also relates to major Patna District trends (Fig. 39), as may be seen by comparison to works from Nālandā such as Figs. 129-130, which may, however, be slightly later in date. The dated metal representation of Pārvaṭī from the reign of Nārāyaṇapāla (Fig. 43) is somewhat of an anomaly to Pāla art in general and although its relation to other developments in the Patna District or in Magadha in general may not be seen easily, its existence does not negate the stylistic parameters being discussed. The Madanapāla period Pārvaṭī (Fig. 78), on the other hand, offers further evidence that Bihār Sharīf fell within the stylistic sphere of the Patna District developments. Its resemblance to the Tārā from Tetrāwān (Fig. 74) and to aspects of Figs. 135-138 from Nālandā in details, such as the lotus petals, suggest general associations with Patna District sculptures.

A center as large and flourishing as this, however, undoubtedly employed craftsmen capable of executing works distinctive in their own right, though perhaps still a part of the regional traditions. Hopefully, future discovery or study will enable us to assign sculptures from Bihār Sharīf their rightful provenance so that a more thorough and realistic appraisal of the artistic styles at Uddanāpura may be made.

### *Ghosrāwān*

The village of Ghosrāwān is located about twelve kilometers east of Nālandā and ten or eleven kilometers southeast of Bihār Sharīf. While 19th century explorers visited the site and made notes on it, scientific excavations have never been carried out. The site is probably most famous for the so-called Ghosrāwān inscription found by Kittoe in 1848,<sup>100</sup> although several rather large and important sculptures were also noted at the various ruins of mounds and temples. Once again, some confusion has arisen regarding provenance of sculptures which are presently in the Patna and Indian museums and I have found very few examples which may be said to have come from Ghosrāwān with certainty.<sup>101</sup> The ancient name and identification of this primarily Buddhist site are still a matter of conjecture.<sup>102</sup>

An image of a four-armed standing Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara, which had been erroneously identified as Vajrasattva by Broadley,<sup>103</sup> stands about three meters high and is presently kept at the Indian Museum (Fig. 140). The iconography of this image, with the central figure of a Bodhisattva being crowned by *vidyādhara*s, is unique among the Pāla sculptures thus far discovered although images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas being crowned are known in other parts of India and Asia.<sup>104</sup> The monumental scale of this image and the elongation of the figure which occurs mainly in the legs interfere somewhat in the analysis of style since they misleadingly suggest that the image might be of a later Pāla date. Other features, such as the almost entirely plain back-slab, minimal jewelry and ornamentation, lack of complicated and elaborate iconographic details and simplicity of the lotus pedestal, in contrast, imply an early date. The facial features as well suggest a date in the early Pāla period, and thus, on balance, it may be inferred that the image dates from the 9th century. The unusual arrangement of forms and unique iconographic design in this image suggest that the carvers of Ghosrāwān were innovative in both respects. The large scale and high quality of workmanship further indicate that the Ghosrāwān religious establishment might once have been a main center of artistic production. Hopefully, future investigation of this site will reveal more information about what may be a major subschool of the Patna District.

### *Tetrāwān*

The village of Tetrāwān is situated about three kilometers north of Ghosrāwān. The rather extensive ruins of this Buddhist establishment were noted by Kittoe, Cunningham

<sup>100</sup> See above p. 109.

<sup>101</sup> Asher ("Former Broadley Collection," pl. XI) has attributed a figure of Muṇḍeśvarī to Tetrāwān. However, the Indian Museum records as given in Bloch's *Supplementary Catalogue*, p. 95, assert that the image is from Ghosrāwān. While I am inclined to trust the Museum attribution, I am still refraining from using this image as an example from Ghosrāwān, since the purpose of this geographical approach is to use only documented pieces that seem to be beyond question.

<sup>102</sup> Cunningham (ASR, XI, p. 171) notes that Ghosrāwān is not mentioned in the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims (Fa-hsien and Hsüan Tsang); he assumes that this is because the foundation of the site post-dates the times of their visits to the region.

<sup>103</sup> The caption to one of Broadley's photographs in the album published by Asher ("Former Broadley Collection," pl. IV) indicates that Broadley identified this image as Vajrasattva, but it is clearly a representation of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara.

<sup>104</sup> A litany of Avalokiteśvara in cave 10A at Ajanṭā, for example, shows the Bodhisattva being crowned. For an illustration, see Walter M. Spink, ed., *Ajanṭā*, American Committee for South Asian Art Microfiche Archive (Zug, Switzerland: Inter Documentation Co., 1975), fiche no. 26, frames 20-22.

and Broadley<sup>105</sup> and several important inscriptions and images have also been described from this site. As in the case of the Ghosrāwān Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara, some of the images from Tetrāwān are unusual and suggest that a separate subschool of the Patna District existed there. Since the two sites are so near to each other, it is possible that one very innovative group of artisans was shared by both establishments.

An image of a seated Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā* (Fig. 141) was part of the Broadley collection and its provenance has been ascertained from the photographs in the Broadley album.<sup>106</sup> Relationship to the Ghosrāwān Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara may be seen in the facial features of this figure as well as in the use of plain spaces as an integral part of the composition, suggesting the idea of a common workshop and perhaps a similar date, ca. 9th century. However, the Buddha image is unusual, if not unique, in several other respects. For example, the incised, flat flower design which forms the halo has been seen previously only as part of a *prabhāmaṇḍala* or the decoration of the perimeter of the back-slab.<sup>107</sup> The tree above the head of the Buddha is depicted much more graphically and occupies a much larger relative space in the carving than is usually the case.<sup>108</sup> The stiffness of the tree is reiterated in the very rigid posture of the Buddha with the torso appearing to jut forward. The lap of the Buddha is tilted, or appears to be seen as if from above in that the palm of the left hand and the sole of the left foot are nearly parallel to the vertical surface of the image. The erect position of the Buddha's torso makes it seem to project forward from the bolsters behind the figure, which have an expanding form of their own. The depth of carving seen in the lion-atop-elephant motifs is similar to that of the bodhi tree at the top of the stele and the three elements create a triangular grouping which lends both dynamism and unity to the sculpture. Thus, given certain basic iconographic and stylistic precepts, the Tetrāwān sculptor used them for an entirely different purpose than artisans of other schools. For example, the dynamism in this sculpture is very different from the animation achieved by Nālandā sculptors through the use of deeply carved surfaces. The probable existence of more images with similar characteristics may eventually lead to a new definition of this subschool of Pāla sculpture.<sup>109</sup>

### Dāpthū

Although Broadley identified what he felt was a Buddhist temple and some Buddhist images at Dāpthū in his report of 1872,<sup>110</sup> the temples and sculptures at the village today are all Brahmanical. This village is located only a few kilometers from Islampur in the Patna District, but its position in Patna versus Gaya District is somewhat unclear.<sup>111</sup> As in the cases of Ghosrāwān and Tetrāwān, the art styles in evidence at this village are quite different from those found at other sites and would suggest the presence of a strong local

tradition. It is possible that yet undiscovered or unnoticed antiquities in the immediate vicinity would also be part of this stylistic spectrum so that the art of Dāpthū would have been part of a specific subtype. Beside its importance for stylistic individuality, Dāpthū is also an essential document of active Brahmanical artistic production in Magadha throughout the Pāla period and serves as a link between the Magadhan and Bengal Brahmanical images.

Perhaps one of the earliest figures from Dāpthū is a colossal image of Viṣṇu (Fig. 142). The relationship between this sculpture and the pre-Pāla images found throughout the Magadha region is immediately apparent, and it may be compared to some of the Viṣṇu images from Āpsādh in particular (Fig. 95). On the basis of this stylistic association, the image may be dated to the late 7th century.

The majority of images at the site today, however, seem to date from the 9th and 10th centuries and it is these which show a distinctive regional style that appears to share features of both Patna and Gaya District trends. An image of a four-armed standing Viṣṇu (Fig. 143) demonstrates this quite well. In terms of the three-dimensionality of the forms, this sculpture is more related to carvings from the Patna District. And yet, the overall configuration and depiction of individual elements relate to examples seen in the Gaya District. Thus, this image may be compared to numerous Bodhisattva sculptures from the Gaya District<sup>112</sup> in the shape and treatment of the body, the forms of the jewelry, the similarity of the edging of the back-slab and halo and to some extent the treatment of the attendant figures. And yet, the deep relief of the back-slab elements, the crowdedness of the stele and the difference in facial type of the Dāpthū figure suggest a slight modification of the Gaya style. The Dāpthū sculpture may be dated to the late 9th or early 10th century by virtue of its similarity to Magadhan developments at that time as previously discussed.

The very three-dimensional carving and rather rounded body forms seen in this image seem to be typical of carvings from Dāpthū, as may be seen in other examples. A fragmentary image of Śiva Naṭarāja (Fig. 144), also of the late 9th or 10th century by comparison to other works ascribed to this period, is lying unprotected, apparently still in the same place where Buchanan-Hamilton saw it in 1811-1812, as may be verified by his description of it which reads, in part, as "a many armed male, dancing with one foot on a bull, and another on a footstool, and very familiar with a lady standing on a lion..."<sup>113</sup> The three-dimensionality of the image may best be understood by an examination of the elements of the lower portion of the stele. In the majority of stelae from Magadha, the elements of the pedestal (for example, vines, devotees, lions, etc.) are generally strung out across the width of the structure without the suggestion of various locations in space.<sup>114</sup> In this case the forms are carved in both varying degrees of depth as well as in reference to different locations in space. Thus, Śiva's bull, Nandī, is almost completely free-standing, as is Pārvaṭī's lion. The devotees to the viewer's left seem to be placed forward compared to those to the right of them, and the entire configuration of Śiva, his bull and his lotus pedestal appear to be not only next to but in front of the figure of Pārvaṭī on her lion. This is in direct contrast to the majority of images we have discussed thus far which either have one plane stretching the entire width of the pedestal (Fig. 112), or show the pedestal

<sup>105</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 571.

<sup>106</sup> Asher, "Former Broadley Collection," pl. VI.

<sup>107</sup> See Figs. 100-101.

<sup>108</sup> Compare to Fig. 118, for example.

<sup>109</sup> Because of the problems set forth in n. 99 above, I am not discussing the several sculptures which Asher attributes to Tetrāwān.

<sup>110</sup> Broadley, "Buddhistic Remains," pp. 256-58.

<sup>111</sup> Early authors place Dāpthū in Patna District, as does Patil (*Antiquarian Remains*, p. 90). More recently, it has been reassigned to Gaya District and was published in this way by Asher (*Art of Eastern India*, pl. 190, etc.). I have grouped Dāpthū with Patna District sites, although it is clearly a transitional site.

<sup>112</sup> Fig. 115 from Kurkihār, for example.

<sup>113</sup> Buchanan-Hamilton, *Bihar-Patna Report*, I:237-38.

<sup>114</sup> Fig. 112, for example.

divided into *rathas* of usually three units in the 9th and 10th centuries (Fig. 114) or five or seven units as in the late 10th to 12th centuries (Fig. 135). This less rigidly conceived organization, which does not force elements into fixed positions, suggests the presence of an individualized local tradition.

One further element of interest in this stele is the treatment of the border of the image, which is totally different from others we have seen in Magadha. Although the basic iconographic elements are the same, including an outer border of flames and an inner garland motif, the treatment and execution are very unusual. The main difference, once again, arises from the increased effect of plasticity of the forms achieved by deeper undercutting. The pearls or beads of the garland, for example, appear much rounder than usual<sup>115</sup> and, instead of having a straight line to demarcate them from the solid portion of the garland, the incised portion seems to follow their round shapes. A slight increase in the proportionate width of the solid part of the garland makes the beads seem even further recessed. Together, these small differences suggest what must be called a distinctive style of sculpture at Dāpṭhū.<sup>116</sup>

#### *Conclusions About Patna District*

The artistic developments in Patna District parallel those in Gaya District to a great degree in that the two regions underwent major periods of activity at the same time. The known art of the Patna District is dominated by the remains from Nālandā, although it is probable that the art traditions at Uddanāpura and Rājgir must have been important. This pattern parallels that of Gaya District, where a few main centers, namely Bodh Gayā, Kurkihār and Gayā in particular, comprised an important network of art-producing sites. While sharing general Magadhan characteristics with their Gaya District counterparts, Patna District stone sculptures also have identifiable features which distinguish them. As in Gaya District, the Buddhist traditions of this region were more prominent than the Hindu ones. This is not surprising, since these two districts comprise what was once the heartland of ancient Magadha.

#### CONCLUSIONS ABOUT MAGADHA

The richness and variety of both stylistic and iconographic traditions in the sculpture of Magadha from the 8th-12th centuries is evident, even from the relatively limited number of examples included here. It might be suggested that, even if other schools of Bihar and Bengal art were unknown to us today, the importance of the Magadhan remains would be sufficient to place them among the major artistic traditions of India, especially with regard to Buddhist art. To a great degree, the sculptural schools of Magadha may be seen as variations on certain themes, so that while the art of the region has certain prevalent characteristics, they are manifested in a number of ways. Within Magadha as a whole,

<sup>115</sup> Compare to Fig. 104.

<sup>116</sup> An interesting iconographic type found at the site and known from several examples shows a seated male deity flanked by two female consorts, which have been identified as Kāma with Rati and Tṛṣṇā by R. D. Banerji (*EISMS*, p. 123). The rarity of this subject at other eastern Indian sites (in fact, I have not found a single example) suggests that a particular cult of these deities had arisen at the site. Thus, along with its distinctive style traits, Dāpṭhū may have had characteristic iconographic developments as well.

then, sub-regional styles, roughly parallel to modern divisions of the area into districts, and even site styles, may be identified.

There is little doubt that the sculptural developments of Magadha from the early Pāla period, primarily the 9th and 10th centuries, comprise the bulk of what must be considered to be early Pāla art. This region must have been the artistic hub of eastern India, though, of course, many other important art-producing sites existed further to the east, for example, in Bengal. Undoubtedly, the works produced during this period had great bearing on 11th-12th century works in the region, and on works made contemporaneously and later in other regions, to say nothing of developments which occurred outside of India, such as in Nepal and Tibet.

#### ANĠA: THE INTERFACE REGION BETWEEN MAGADHA AND BENGAL

The above discussions of the sculptural developments in Magadha (Patna and Gaya Districts) account for a majority of the images made in the region of modern Bihar, south of the Ganges, during the Pāla period. Further east of Magadha, the kingdom of Anḡa may be considered a secondary center, having significant Buddhist and Brahmanical remains. Anḡa was at various times part of the Magadha kingdom and, at others, a principality of Bengal dynasties.<sup>117</sup> Its position as an interface region between Magadha and Bengal is clearly reflected in its art, which reveals the influences of both regions. Generally speaking, the kingdom of Anḡa corresponds to the modern districts of Bhagalpur south of the Ganges, Monghyr, and some of the adjacent regions, such as parts of Santal Parganas. Anḡa was one of the sixteen great states (Mahājanapada) flourishing around the time of the Buddha, and supposedly, the Buddha's religious activity was confined to the Gangetic plain from Śrāvastī, in Uttar Pradesh on the west, to Campā, the capital of Anḡa on the east.<sup>118</sup> Thus, it is not surprising to find a number of important Buddhist sites in this region, although Jainism and Brahmanism were also apparently popular in this area.

#### THE MONGHYR DISTRICT

The Monghyr District is adjacent to both Patna and Gaya Districts on the east. It is divided by the Ganges River into northern and southern portions, and both sections have yielded artistic remains of importance to this study. Contact with both the sculptural styles of Magadha and Bengal will be seen in the images from Monghyr District, reflecting its geographical position between them.

Two images found at separate locations in Monghyr are stylistically related to each other as well as to a number of images already seen from the more westerly portions of Bihar, namely, the Shahabad, Gaya and Patna Districts, and also to works found in Bengal. The first, representing Umā-Maheśvara, was found at Kashtaharini Ghāṭ, Monghyr town (Fig. 145); the second, showing Sūrya, was found at Lakhisarai in northern Monghyr (Fig. 146). On the basis of comparison to sculptures from other districts of Bihar, the images may be dated to the late 8th century. For example, although

<sup>117</sup> See the earlier discussion regarding geography, p. 82.

<sup>118</sup> Sunity Kumar Sinha, "Bhagalpur through Centuries," *JBRs XLVII*, 1-4 (1961):188. [Volume bears also separate title, *Mahā-Paṇḍita Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana Memorial Volume*.]

differences in workshops may be discerned, the flatly incised flower motif along the borders of the back-slabs and the short, stocky figures may be compared to those aspects of Fig. 100, from Bodh Gayā, which may be slightly later. Comparison to sculpture from Bengal (Fig. 204) suggests the transitional character of some of the art works of Aṅga between the traditions of Magadha and those of Bengal. At least one feature, however, seems to be distinctive of Monghyr District sculptures. The tops of the stelae, instead of being rounded like those of images previously noted, are slightly squared in both examples. Several other sculptures from Monghyr also bear this feature, and until some examples of this type are found elsewhere, it may be surmised that it was a local variation. Other elements, such as the clothing and ornaments worn by Sūrya, are virtually indistinguishable from contemporaneous carvings from districts further west in Bihar.

This apparently regional peculiarity of making the back-slab rectangular is also seen in what is probably an early 9th century image of Viṣṇu which was found at Singhrikee village in the Monghyr District (Fig. 147). The forms in this work suggest that they are direct outgrowths of 8th-century types, and once again, features that appear to be distinctive of the Monghyr region indicate that a local style had taken hold by this time. The floral pattern along the perimeter of the still-squared back-slab is no longer defined simply through incised line. Instead, a "figure-ground" configuration has been set up with negative and positive elements defining the forms. Also, the basic design of the flowers has been altered considerably. The figure of Viṣṇu as well differs from images from other districts. When compared to an early 9th century figure from Bodh Gayā (Fig. 101), the differences become more apparent: the Monghyr Viṣṇu is much more muscular. Though standing in a posture similar to that of the Bodh Gayā Viṣṇu, this figure appears more actively posed and yet more firmly planted on his feet. The face as well has been given a more lively appearance, with wide open eyes and high arching eyebrows.

It should be noted that the above images from Monghyr are all Brahmanical and distinctly relate to what we have described as the early and pre-Pāla Brahmanical style complex in western Bihar. Thus, they offer further support for the theory of a stylistic separation of Buddhist and Brahmanical imagery prior to the mid-9th century. The individuality of the local carvers, however, has clearly been expressed and gives rise to what must be classified as a distinct substyle.

The transitional nature of aspects of the art of Monghyr District, and Aṅga in general, between the schools of Bihar and Bengal, is seen in a representation of Sūrya found in the Monghyr District (Fig. 148). The incised, flat border of the halo-cum-back-slab is an obvious point of comparison between this work and the ones just discussed from Monghyr District, although, of course, differences occur. However, the body of Sūrya is less fleshy and muscular, and appears somewhat akin to examples from the Gaya District. The incised pattern of Sūrya's garment going down the center of his chest is an early example of what became a rather common feature of 11th and 12th century Bengal sculptures. Other forms as well relate this image to Bengal styles and provide information that Monghyr District served as a sort of buffer zone between the major centers of Magadha on the west and those of Bengal on the east. This image was probably executed in the late 9th century because of the still full forms of the figure, and especially the decoration of the halo.

A figure of a standing Buddha from Lakhisarai (Fig. 149) is not so dramatic in its departure from Magadhan norms, but it is more likely to represent a local development or tradition in Monghyr District. The extremely elongated and slender figure probably represents

a counterpart in stone to the aesthetic of sleek, attenuated forms seen in the three dated metal images of the 11th century from the reign of Vīgrahapāla (III) (Figs. 69-71). The facial features are similar to those on late 11th century images from Nālandā,<sup>119</sup> yet the borders of the halo and back-slab are similar to examples from the 10th and early 11th century (Figs. 50, 52, 53). Thus, a date of about the 11th century may be suggested. Since this is one of the few Buddhist images from Monghyr District which have come to my notice, it is difficult to say whether it reflects an entire style complex or is an isolated example.

A small image, probably depicting Bhairava, was recently collected from Abhāyapur in Monghyr District and is presently at the Patna Museum (Fig. 150). This late Buddhist iconographic form seems to have gained some currency in the 12th century in India, and subsequently became extremely popular in Nepal and Tibet. This image, and others like it, therefore, served as important prototypes for tantric Buddhist developments outside of India. Within India, it serves to document the last phase of Buddhism which developed there. This image probably dates from the 12th century. The shape of the stele with its cusped arch at the top recalls that of the 12th century Caṇḍī (Fig. 82) and the rather degenerated and non-specific treatment of the border motif as well indicates this late date.

#### THE BHAGALPUR DISTRICT

Travelling further east along the Ganges from Monghyr District, the next portion of Aṅga to be considered is the Bhagalpur District. Adjacent to Monghyr on the east, and also divided into northern and southern portions by the river, Bhagalpur hosted both Buddhist and Brahmanical establishments of some significance. As in Monghyr, the geographical position of this small area between the main artistic centers of Magadha and those of Bengal resulted in the development of artistic styles revealing ties to both, but in addition, a distinctive set of stylistic formulations also seems to have arisen. Since there were several apparent artistic centers in the Bhagalpur District, they will be treated individually.

#### Antichak

The village of Antichak lies at the foot of Pātharghāṭā Hill, approximately thirty kilometers from Bhāgalpur town. Explorations and excavations over nine seasons of the archaeological ruins near the village by Professors B.P. Sinha and R.C. Prasad Sinha of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology of Patna University have revealed that a flourishing Buddhist monastic establishment existed on this site. Since 1971-72, the site has been excavated further by the Archaeological Survey of India under B.S. Verma.<sup>120</sup> Considerable debate has arisen over the identification and name of this ancient place, and some scholars have suggested that these ruins represent the once flourishing Vikramaśīla monastery.<sup>121</sup> The evidence for this is somewhat meagre, but this

<sup>119</sup> Fig. 136, for example.

<sup>120</sup> The preliminary reports of the Patna University team were published in *Indian Archaeology, a Review*, 1960-61 through 1968-69. For reports of the Archaeological Survey excavations, see *Indian Archaeology, a Review*, 1971-72 ff.

<sup>121</sup> For a recent review of this problem, see Ram Charitra Prasad Singh, "Antichak, the Seat of Vikramaśīla University," *JBRS* XLVI, 1-4 (1960):135-38; Asher, "Vikramaśīla Mahāvihāra," pp. 107-13; Bhagwati Sharan Verma, "Excavation at Antichak," *JBPP* I (1977):192-201.

does not mean that more convincing proof might not someday be forthcoming. Tibetan sources mention that Vikramaśīla was located east of Magadha, on the lower course of the Ganges and near a tall bluff<sup>122</sup> (Pātharghātā Hill?). While the present site certainly fulfills these conditions, it is by no means the only location possible. Perhaps more convincing evidence comes from a very lengthy inscription on all four sides of a stone *stūpa* base in which the word “*vikram...*” has been found.<sup>123</sup> Since the inscription is damaged after this portion, it is not known if “*śīla*” or some comparable ending occurred.

The archaeological ruins at Antichak consist of living quarters for monks, a very large cruciform temple/*stūpa* comparable in type to the one at Pāhārpur, as well as numerous stray finds of stone, terracotta and metal sculpture. Excavations thus far have revealed that the period of activity at this establishment exactly corresponds to what is traditionally held about Vikramaśīla. That is, the foundations seem to date no earlier than the 8th or 9th century, corresponding to Tibetan traditions which say that Vikramaśīla was founded by either Dharmapāla (late 8th or early 9th century) or Devapāla (middle of the 9th century),<sup>124</sup> and the latest remains seem to date from the 12th century, which is the traditional date for the destruction of the monastery by Muslims.<sup>125</sup> Since excavations are far from complete, however, there is still the possibility that new information will modify the presently held views concerning this site.

Terracotta plaques arranged along the exterior of the cruciform temple probably date from the period of initial construction in the 8th or 9th century and may be the earliest sculptural remains from Antichak. The plaques are about thirty-five to forty centimeters in height and approximately twenty-five in width and are arranged in a continuous row around the temple. Although an overall iconographic scheme has not yet been determined, the plaques seem to carry out a general Buddhist theme in the representations of Bodhisattvas, meditating figures, devotees and similar beings. A few of the plaques may relate to *jātaka* stories. A consistent style for the terracottas seems to suggest that they were the work of an established school of workmen, but the style is clearly different from that of stone sculptures which have been found in the area, being both more animated and freely executed.<sup>126</sup>

Many of the stone images which have been discovered at Antichak depict representations of a crowned Buddha with his right hand in the *bhūmisparśamudrā*. While it is certainly possible that this is a matter of chance, it also suggests that this was a popular icon at the site and thus, that this is a reflection of a particular type of Buddhism in practice at this establishment. However, a variety of styles or substyles seems to occur within the narrow iconographic limits which have thus far been discovered.

One such example of a crowned Buddha in *bhūmisparśamudrā* (Fig. 151) carved out of a small piece of limestone is particularly interesting because it bears traces of paint and therefore may be one of our only clues to the original condition of many of these sculptures. The interior portion of the halo is painted blue and its rim is red. Although the front portions of the lotus pedestal are damaged, the sides show traces of red paint, as do portions of the legs of the Buddha. In style, the carving may relate to some forms which had been noted at Bodh Gayā. The same full figure and almost square face of the Buddha call to mind one subtype which had been found at Bodh Gayā.<sup>127</sup> The trilobate crowns are similar in type, although different in detailing. Most probably, the images were executed in approximately the same period (10th or 11th century) although an accurate dating may not be established yet for this type.

Another sculpture shows the Buddha wearing crown and necklace, displaying *bhūmisparśamudrā* and surrounded by representations of seven events in his life (Fig. 152). On the basis of comparison to works from around the 11th century (Fig. 134) in features such as the pointed halos of the subsidiary Buddhas, the general shapes of the crowns and even the figure-types, the image may be ascribed to the same date. Once again, however, the style of this image seems to be based more on Bodh Gayā (or Gaya District) principles than on those of Nālandā and the Patna District. Various elements of this relationship may be seen in comparison to Figs. 108-109. The symmetrical arrangement of the various elements of the composition and the resultant static effect of the whole may be seen in each example. While symmetrical compositions were also seen at Nālandā, these were usually relieved by variations of textures (Fig. 134) or liveliness of postures and inclusion of minute iconographic detail (Fig. 131). The Bodh Gayā examples and that from Antichak, in contrast, allow empty space to exist as a place where carving “is not,” rather than as a dynamic force in the overall scheme. While this may not necessarily be considered a stylistic feature as such, it lends credence to the suggestion that the Antichak sculptors had iconographic designs based on Bodh Gayā models and, in this way, an indirect influence might have been felt. An unusual feature for this late date of the Antichak image is the use of the bead motif along the edge of the throne back and halos since it is not generally seen in 10th-11th century images at Patna and Gaya District sites. Other features as well seem to be different from the central Magadhan trends, such as the shallow incision of the lotus petals, the flattened depiction of the drapery which hangs over the front edge of the throne and also the pedestal which has no decoration except its division into courses. If the Antichak sculptors did base their images on models from the main centers of Magadha, it is possible to interpret the very schematized forms as an abbreviation or simplification of the local styles of Patna and Gaya Districts. The combination of an early element (the bead motif) with an obviously later form (the crowned Buddha himself) might be viewed as selective borrowing from sculpture schools of other times and places. Such a mixture might have occurred when artists (or patrons) viewed icons made at different times but in worship simultaneously at a site such as Bodh Gayā.

In some cases, this derivative quality might even be termed eclecticism. A representation of another crowned Buddha in *bhūmisparśamudrā* (Fig. 153) seems to be a combination of two distinct iconographic designs which have been superimposed on each other. The Buddha in the center, his lotus throne and the lions and devotees at the bottom serve as the

<sup>122</sup> S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks*, p. 358.

<sup>123</sup> This information was given to me verbally by the excavators of the site. Also, an inscription on a potsherd says “vi,” possibly beginning the word Vikramaśīla. See R. C. P. Singh, “Antichak,” p. 138.

<sup>124</sup> There are conflicting traditional accounts which refer alternately to Dharmapāla and to Devapāla as the founder of this monastery. S. Dutt (*Buddhist Monks*, p. 359, n. 3) has traced down the various reports and concludes that Tāranātha and Sumpa refer to Dharmapāla as the founder, but in the colophon of a Tibetan work ascribed to Atīśa, Devapāla is held as the founder. In either case, the monastery would have been founded around the end of the 8th or the beginning of the 9th century.

<sup>125</sup> Apparently, the monastery was in complete ruins at the time of Dharmasvāmin's visit to India in the first half of the 13th century, and therefore it is assumed that the monastery was attacked and destroyed in the late 12th (or early 13th) century. See Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, p. 64.

<sup>126</sup> For illustrations of some of the plaques, see Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, pls. 210-14.

<sup>127</sup> See Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 132.



basis for both designs. The representations of the seven scenes from the life of the Buddha surrounding the central scene would be the first pattern, such as seen in Fig. 152. The second iconographic scheme would show Bodhisattvas seated atop the cross-bars of the throne of the central figure such as in Fig. 118. In this case, to allow for the seven life scenes, the Bodhisattvas have been raised to some degree. In effect, it appears that two iconographic themes are being carried out at once. When Bodhisattvas occur in a stele in which the life scenes are represented, they are usually separated from the rest of the composition by rather obvious means. Here, the Bodhisattvas are virtually indistinguishable from the life scenes since they are carved in the same depth of relief and are the same size. In terms of style, this stele may be viewed as a modified version of Gaya District modes. As in the previous example, the lotus petals are flatly incised and have a static appearance. The cloth hanging down in front of the throne is rigid and the folds are schematized and abstract. Even the facial features of the central figure seem mechanical in their execution, especially the eyes. The image may have been made in the 11th century on the basis of comparison to Gaya District examples, although the eclectic nature of the work could easily indicate that there had been some time delay between the origination of the designs in central Magadha and their use in the Bhagalpur District.

Whether the above examples from Antichak are typical or not may not be determined until more stone sculptures are found at this site. From the high quality of workmanship of other sculptures from the Bhagalpur District, both Buddhist and Brahmanical, it would be surprising if such a large monastic establishment had not produced more significant stylistic and iconographic variations.

### *Sultāngaṇj*

The town of Sultāngaṇj bears the remains of a large Buddhist monastic institution, and the ruins were well noted by 19th century explorers.<sup>128</sup> The site is probably and justly most famous for the over life-sized metal image of a standing Buddha (the so-called "Sultāngaṇj Buddha") which was found there in the course of constructing a railway in 1862 (Fig. 193). While that image belongs to the discussion of metal sculpture in the following chapter, two of the important stone icons found there contribute to the understanding of artistic trends in the Bhagalpur District.

Perhaps the earliest sculpture of concern to this study from Sultāngaṇj is a black stone head from a Buddha image (Fig. 154), which was in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum until its recent theft. It was brought to the museum after having been discovered in a small antique shop at Bath, England in the mid-20th century. The documentation of the head was found on a label adhered to the back which read:

"Found embedded in red clay and dug out during excavations for Sultangange Railway, Bengal, 1862. Head of a Buddhist idol supposed to be more than 2,000 years old."<sup>129</sup>

John Irwin has hypothesized that since the head was not mentioned in the list compiled by Rajendralala Mitra after his visit to Sultāngaṇj in 1864, the fragment had already been

removed before that time.<sup>130</sup> Irwin dates the head to the 5th-6th century on the basis of its similarities to Gupta images, especially one from Mathurā.<sup>131</sup> However, the slightly hardened features, though perhaps partially due to the transfer from a soft sandstone in the Mathurā and Sārnāth pieces to a hard schist or chlorite in the Sultāngaṇj piece, and the more angular planes of the face suggest to me a slightly later date, perhaps the 6th-7th century. I would, therefore, place it with the Sārnāth-influenced forms of that time, such as the stuccos from both Nālandā and Rājgir (Figs. 18-19). In either case, the head shows the definite influence of Gupta art but is carved out of the local black stone medium, and perhaps suggests that the Sultāngaṇj monastery was pre-Pāla in origin and, like Nālandā, received direct stylistic impetus from Sārnāth and Mathurā.

Other early images from Sultāngaṇj are either fragmentary or have been lost in recent times, and hence, the next significant image to be discussed dates from several hundred years later or the late 11th-12th century. This image represents Simhanāda Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 155) and, along with two intricately carved black stone pillars, was found in association with the "Sultāngaṇj Buddha" in the railroad construction work of 1862. At present, all four pieces are kept at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in England. This sculpture exhibits forms which became popular in Magadha during the 11th and 12th centuries, yet depicts them with an extra richness that relates to Bengal schools of that time. The sharing of certain forms between the two artistic centers, Magadha and Bengal, during the later Pāla period is so great, however, that it is an academic issue to decide to which region this image has greater ties. This may be seen most clearly by comparison to a late 11th century image from Nālandā (Fig. 137) and a slightly later one from Bengal (Fig. 77). While certain specific points of comparison between the Simhanāda Avalokiteśvara and the Nālandā Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara may be drawn, such as the nearly identical lotus petals of the lotus pedestals and the facial features of the main figures, similarities exist with the Bengal image as well, mainly in the overall elaborateness of each of the forms.

It thus becomes apparent that during the late 11th and 12th centuries, a certain homogeneity of styles seems to occur throughout Bihar and Bengal, in some cases making regional differences minimal. It is possible that this unity resulted from the very real problem of finding work for the sculptors whose services were needed less in the declining kingdom of Magadha than in Bengal where activity was at a peak. Thus, stone carvers trained at the Buddhist monasteries in Magadha might have been tempted to move east where the later Pāla and Sena kings were building new capital cities, bringing their traditional methods with them.

### *Miscellaneous Sites*

The sites of Antichak and Sultāngaṇj have given us only a limited idea of the developments of style in Bhagalpur District, since so much of their material is still buried. Our knowledge of other remains in Bhagalpur District is even less systematic and we may only surmise about the major developments. Thus, instead of attempting the presently futile task of trying to reconstruct the main trends, some of the more interesting and perhaps rare images will be discussed.

<sup>128</sup> The remains at Sultāngaṇj are treated under the site of Jāhangira in Cunningham, ASR, XV, pp. 24-27.

<sup>129</sup> John Irwin, "Some Unknown Gupta Sculptures from Sultāngaṇj," *Artibus Asiae* XVII, 1 (1954):35.

<sup>130</sup> Rajendralala Mitra, "On the Buddhist Remains of Sultāngaṇj," *JASB* XXXIII (1864):360-72; Irwin, "Some Unknown Gupta Sculptures," p. 36.

<sup>131</sup> Irwin, "Some Unknown Gupta Sculptures," p. 35.



Iconographically, an image from Bhāgalpur town is very interesting since it represents the Jina Buddha Ratnasambhava (Fig. 156). It is one of the few Pāla period sculptures which has come to my attention showing this Buddha as a separate entity (although it may have been part of a set), since his usual appearance is with the other four Jina Buddhas as subsidiary elements of a stele.<sup>132</sup> There can be no question that this image represents Ratnasambhava since his horse *vāhana* and characteristic *varadamudrā* are clearly depicted in this relief. The outward appearance of this sculpture belies its probable period of manufacture in many respects. At first glance, it suggests a 9th-10th century date since the iconographic scheme showing a seated Buddha on a throne, with *stūpas*, *vidyādhara*s, double-banded halo and lions-atop-elephants was common at that time. However, just as we had seen at Antichak, certain peculiarities of style suggest that, although based on earlier Magadhan prototypes, the image itself represents a codification of forms and thus a copying of earlier types. The key features which betray this are the very stylized and regularized folds of the drapery hanging in front of the throne, the flattened lotus petals seemingly copied from early Pāla types, and the regularized folds of the Buddha's garment particularly as it hangs over his left shoulder. Even the motifs of the two bands of the halo appear schematized in their depiction. Perhaps the most obvious feature suggesting a later date is the very strongly pointed top of the stele which did not generally occur in the 9th and 10th centuries, or when it did, was not so accentuated. These features, along with the advanced iconographic form, suggest that the image was made around the 11th century (or later) and represents an archaism on the part of the carvers who were probably looking to Magadhan prototypes or were basing their images on earlier designs.

In contrast, an image of Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara from Colgong in the Bhagalpur District exhibits a high degree of individuality in many respects (Fig. 157). In this case as well, the subject is rare in Pāla period sculpture, but instead of relying upon iconographic types which were well-established and could be adapted to the present use, the sculptors assembled a variety of forms, modified them and reintegrated them. Thus, Saḍakṣarī wears a head-dress unlike any we have seen before, his arm-bands are unusual in that they show *kīrttimukhas* in place of abstract arrangements of jewels, the outer rim of his halo has a design unlike any we have seen, the *makara* ends of the cross-bars of the throne back, and many other features show great ingenuity on the part of the carver. It is entirely possible that other images of this workshop will be discovered in the future, but this does not diminish the fact that the Aṅga carver managed to create completely new forms and depart from the strong influence of the Magadhan tradition. The sculpture may be ascribed to the late 11th or 12th century on the basis of comparison to dated works of that time (Figs. 73-74, 77).

#### CONCLUSIONS ABOUT AṅGA

Compared to the numerous images from Magadha, a paucity of sculptures is found in the ancient kingdom of Aṅga further to the east. While this is partially due to the fact that this area is still largely unexplored and unexcavated, it is also probable that fewer religious institutions arose in this region, since it existed outside the Buddhist core in Magadha as well as outside of the purview of the various kingdoms which developed in Bengal.

<sup>132</sup> For example, Fig. 137.

Instead, this region served as a crossroads between two major art-producing areas and frequently showed evidence of influence from both. However, masterpieces such as the Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara from Colgong or the Sirmānāda Avalokiteśvara from Sultāngaṅj also testify that Aṅga must have had well established workshops of its own. Although included in the discussion of Bihar trends since it falls within the modern boundaries of the state, this region should be thought of as related to both Magadha and Bengal, and yet an entity in itself as well.

It should be mentioned that the Rājmaḥāl Hill range is located at the eastern end of Aṅga. Supposedly, stone quarries in this range provided much of the black stone which was used in Pāla-Sena period carvings. However, it seems that the dark, dense stone from these quarries was used most commonly in Bengal sculptures as well as those from the Bhagalpur District while the majority of Magadhan sculptures are carved in a much less dense, greyish colored stone believed to have been quarried from the vicinity of Gayā. Thus, the high polish and tremendous amount of detail which was popular in later Pāla and Sena period sculptures may be related to the fact that, with the shift in artistic centers from Magadha to the more eastern regions, the darker stone which easily lent itself to the elaborate carving was more available. While this should not be considered a dominating factor in stylistic development, it was certainly not a hindrance. The occurrence of dark black sculptures in Magadha and greyish ones in Bengal suggests as well that other quarries existed and perhaps that exchange of raw materials occurred.

#### OTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN BIHAR

The general emphasis thus far has been to describe the main stylistic developments and centers of Bihar. There is probably no end to the number of workshops and stylistic variations that could be defined for the four hundred year period of concern in this study, as numerous sites in Bihar both north and south of the Ganges have yielded quite extensive sculptural remains. However, one of the more interesting developments occurs in the Saran District, north of the Ganges and at the western end of modern Bihar state. Just as the easternmost portion of Bihar showed ties to the workshops to the east of it, the westernmost portions of the province came into contact with developments occurring to the west of it. Saran's position at the western end of Bihar made it a frequent passageway during invasions from western and central Indian forces and, as a result of this contact, a sculpture style grew up in this area which may be termed "Pāla-Cedi."<sup>133</sup> For the purposes here, the Cedi region refers to the land lying between the Jumna and Narmada Rivers, at various times occupied by Candellas, Gurjara-Pratihāras, Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Kalacuris and others. Thus, by Cedi influence, the entire style complex ranging from Khajurāho of the Candellas to the temples of Rajasthan and Gujarat of the 9th-11th centuries is implied. Since the Pāla rulers of Bihar were, at various times, engaged in struggles with kings of the Cedi region and since the Saran District was a kind of buffer zone between the Cedi and Pāla regions, it is not surprising that a stylistic blend occurred.

Thus far, I have identified Cedi influence only in Brahmanical images from Saran District.<sup>134</sup> Since the art of the Cedi country is largely Brahmanical, in accordance with

<sup>133</sup> The only reference I have found to this designation is in P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 95, entry no. 12; p. 96, entry no. 14.

<sup>134</sup> Susan L. Huntington, "The Pāla-Chedi Style of Sculpture," in forthcoming *festschrift* to A. B. M. Habibullah by the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dacca.

the religious preferences of the rulers and populace, it is likely that exchange of designs and styles took place largely among similar sects. Thus, several images of Sūrya and Viṣṇu and one of Umā-Maheśvara have been discovered in Saran District which clearly reflect a Pāla-Cedi style. It should be noted that many images from Saran District belong strictly to the Pāla formulation and show no influence of Cedi art, though these must be left for another, more thorough survey of the Bihar materials.

Two sculptures of Viṣṇu may be used to demonstrate the main features of the Pāla-Cedi blend (Figs. 158-159). The first (Fig. 158) is from Eksari and the second (Fig. 159) is from Silour, both in the Saran District. The resemblance to Pāla forms is most clearly seen in the first image in the overall arrangement of iconographic elements<sup>135</sup> as well as specific details, such as the four lines representing drapery across the chest and the heavy collar-type necklace,<sup>136</sup> the lotus pedestal beneath the feet of the main figure and the detailing of the lower portion of the stele.<sup>137</sup> However, other details, such as the facial characteristics especially, are not typical of Bihar or Bengal sculpture. The second image, too, has certain similarities to the usual Pāla period carvings, including, as in the first sculpture, the black stone material out of which it is carved. However, this piece is even more striking in its differences from typical Pāla works, as seen in the style of jewelry worn by the central figure, such as the chain which narrows at the bottom and the triangular rays of the halo. The source for these unusual features, as well as the non-eastern facial characteristics, is visible in many of the sculptures which are found throughout the Cedi country.<sup>138</sup>

These images, and perhaps others of the Pāla-Cedi style blend, may date from the late 10th, or, more probably, the 11th century. The crown and head-dress of Viṣṇu in the image from Eksari may be compared for their general shape and configuration to those features of the Viṣṇu from Bāghaurā of the reign of Mahīpāla (I) (Fig. 52), and the depiction of Lakṣmī to Viṣṇu's proper right in the same image bears similarities to the woman in the architectural fragment from the temple of Bālāditya from Nālandā, also dating from the reign of Mahīpāla (I) (Fig. 56). The second sculpture, that from Silour, is more difficult to assess since the details differ from typical Pāla period works. However, it bears a number of similarities to 11th century works, such as the figure of Sūrya from the reign of Govindacandra (Fig. 66), in the general appearance of the head-dresses of the main figures, the inner necklaces worn by the figures of Viṣṇu and Sūrya and the relative overall complexity of the images.

Numerous other examples may be used to demonstrate the relationships both to Pāla and Cedi sculpture, but these will suffice for the general purposes here. The Pāla-Cedi style should properly be considered a peripheral statement of the general Pāla trends, but one which is of considerable interest, since a few of its features eventually may be identified in Bengal Brahmanical imagery.

#### CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BIHAR SCHOOLS OF STONE SCULPTURE

Although a thorough survey of all the Pāla period art producing centers of Bihar would have to be done before a complete picture could emerge, this more limited discussion has

revealed that the region was divided into stylistic "spheres of influence," frequently centering on important religious institutions and sites. Travel and contact between such centers was apparently extensive throughout the 8th-12th centuries, so that certain widespread characteristics are visible in the art, while, at the same time, recognizable schools may be discerned. Religion seems to have played some role in the developments of both style and iconography. In the pre-Pāla and early Pāla periods especially, substantive differences between most Buddhist and Brahmanical images may be observed, a phenomenon which might have occurred because of different sources for artistic styles of the two religions. Such distinction, between the art of one religion and that of another, occurs rarely, if at all, in the long history of South Asian art, and there may have been complex circumstances in the history and transmission of the two religions which account for this. By the 9th century, the period of Devapāla, such distinctions had disappeared, and regional and local styles within Bihar became the rule.

From the point of view of religion, Buddhist images are clearly in the majority in Bihar, although, of course, the Hindu religion is also well represented throughout the period of concern. While the archaeological and inscriptional evidence is still somewhat enigmatic regarding the extent of Pāla patronage, or even Pāla influence on the Buddhist art of Bihar, it is apparent that the art and religion were allowed to flourish, whether through tacit approval or more direct involvement. Since Magadha is the Buddhist homeland, Buddhist pilgrims and patrons from outside of the eastern Indian regions must have brought wealth to the region and must have contributed to this florescence of Indian art. Thus, regardless of the precise role played by the Pālas, or other Indian rulers, the region had international acclaim, and was able to live up to its central position in the Buddhist religion through the rich and flourishing traditions of the period. Alongside the Buddhist developments, Brahmanical centers, such as those of Gayā and other less-renowned sites, fostered the growth of artistic styles and iconographic types which not only parallel trends in other parts of India and Bangladesh, but which were also highly individualized in their own right.

<sup>135</sup> Compare to Fig. 101.

<sup>136</sup> Compare to Fig. 52.

<sup>137</sup> Compare to Fig. 229 for the concept but not the style.

<sup>138</sup> For example, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, Figs. 211-212 and pp. 264-65; Huntington, "Pāla-Chedi Style," Figs. 4-5.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# METAL SCULPTURE OF BIHAR

In contrast to stone sculptures of the Pāla period, which are abundant at numerous sites and villages throughout Bihar and Bengal, metal<sup>1</sup> images have come to our attention primarily through more isolated chance finds. In a few cases, such as at Nālandā or Pāhārpur, metal images have been found during the course of excavation. It is no wonder, then, that our knowledge of Bihar and Bengal metal icons is far less systematic than our understanding of the stone sculptures—in spite of the fact that metal was probably a very popular medium. In part, the relative scarcity of bronze and other metal images may be due to the intrinsic value of the material itself which may have resulted in the melting down of old sculptures for new purposes, such as making coins, jewelry, weapons or even other images. Thus, it is probable that a high percentage of the once existing images is now completely lost. Other images must have been carried away from India by pilgrims and monks or other travellers. This can be verified by a number of specimens of definite Indian origin which have recently been brought out of Nepal, Tibet and other countries, including China, but which must have been in those countries for many centuries.

Even though our chances of ever being able to put together a complete history of Bihar and Bengal metal images has been greatly diminished, it is still possible to study the material which has become available and gain some understanding of the stylistic and iconographic developments. Many of the same trends seen in stone sculptures will be found for metal images—that is, regional factors, sectarian and religious differences each plays a part in determining the forms of various images. In this survey, nearly all of the sites which have yielded metal images will be discussed, in contrast to the treatment of stone sculptures in which only the main centers could be included. The only metal images that have been traced from the Imādpur hoard were included in Chapter 3 (Figs. 62-63) and will not be discussed again. Also, Uddanāpura (Fig. 43) is eliminated from this context because of the paucity of material.

### MAGADHA

#### THE PATNA DISTRICT

##### Nālandā

Until the discovery of the Kurkihār hoard of metal images in 1930, the Nālandā finds formed the only large body of Pāla period metal sculptures, and today, they still out-

<sup>1</sup> It has become common practice, though incorrect, to refer to the metal images of India in general as “bronzes.” However, since pieces made of gold and silver or other alloys are known, it is preferable to refer to metal images as, simply, metal images. The term bronze is properly applied to pieces made primarily of copper with some tin, while the term brass refers to works made of copper and zinc. For the most part, the actual metals used in the Bihar and Bengal sculptural tradition have not been analyzed; normally, it is assumed that an alloy, perhaps the “octo-alloy” prescribed in texts, was employed. In this volume, I have used “metal” instead of “bronze” as the generic term.

number the metal images yet discovered at any other site. Fortunately, the Nālandā images document a rather lengthy time span, ranging from the 7th-8th century to approximately the 12th century, and hence a fairly thorough documentation of the entire Nālandā development may be construed. Although the specific location of most of these images as they were excavated at Nālandā is known, it seems that sculptures of different periods were in use together at individual chapels. Thus, the find spot of a sculpture is not necessarily or even generally a meaningful clue to its date.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, to ascertain the dates of the images, we must once again rely on the dated examples and then use stylistic analysis to place them in their contexts.

A figure of a standing Buddha (Fig. 160) belongs to the earliest group of surviving metal images from Nālandā. Slender and youthful looking, the Buddha stands in a relaxed posture with the weight of his body shifted to one side in a slight *bhaṅga*. The body is conceived in rather boyish proportions, with the head somewhat large in relation to the rest of the figure. His facial features in turn are large by comparison to the size of the face and head—a characteristic which remains a part of the Nālandā metal image aesthetic throughout the development, with only a few exceptions. The half-closed eyes tend to dominate the face while the cheeks and lower half of the face seem less full than might be found in life. This sculpture and others similar to it are notable in their resemblance to the Gupta stylistic formulations of the Sārnāth and Mathurā schools. Since Gupta metal sculptures are rare, we must base our judgements on what we know of Gupta sculpture in general. The most obvious point of similarity between this image and Gupta prototypes is the treatment of the robe as it clings to the shape of the body, its double hem and the particular way the neckline forms a rolled collar.<sup>3</sup> However, other features of the image prevent its assignment to a Gupta date. For example, the fragment of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* which still remains shows flamelike projections occurring at intervals along the exterior of the rim. These are similar in concept, although not in precise form, to those seen on the Khadga Sarvānī (Fig. 26) which is dated by its inscription to the late 7th or early 8th century.<sup>4</sup> Later in the Nālandā development, these flames appear much closer together, as in images from the reign of Devapāla,<sup>5</sup> but their present form suggests a late 7th-8th century date for the image. The heavy dependence on Gupta tradition is not surprising at this date since we have also seen it in stone sculptures and, slightly earlier, in stuccos at Nālandā. This dependence on the Sārnāth/Mathurā Gupta forms in fact remains part of the Nālandā artistic repertoire throughout its development.

It is interesting to note the resemblance in style between this figure and several Nepali metal sculptures which are commonly dated to the 12th-13th centuries.<sup>6</sup> It has been suggested that these images derive from the Sārnāth tradition,<sup>7</sup> but more certainly, this link is

<sup>2</sup> The finding of an image in the so-called Bālaputradeva monastery at Nālandā (above p. 109), for example, does not necessarily mean that the work was created during the time of the initial construction of the monastery during the reign of Devapāla. Early writers, such as F.D.K. Bosch, who wrote at a time before much was known about Pāla period metal sculpture, assumed that many of the metal pieces from this monastery had been transported from Java, where they had been manufactured. For a summary, see August Johan Bernet-Kempers, *The Bronzes of Nalanda and Hindu-Javanese Art* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1933), pp. 10-12.

<sup>3</sup> Compare to Figs. 6, 9, 10.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 28-29 above.

<sup>5</sup> Figs. 28-29.

<sup>6</sup> See *The Arts of India and Nepal: The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1966), figs. 91-92 (91 especially) [hereafter, *Heeramaneck Catalogue*].

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., see the discussion of fig. 91.

at least once removed, probably having been filtered through pre-Pāla and Pāla developments such as those seen at Nālandā. The boyish sweetness of the Nālandā piece is clearly a feature of the Nepali examples and, in fact, this characteristic is one of the overriding features of much of Nepali art.

Similar stylistic features are seen in a figure of Mañjuśrī Kumāra (Fig. 161). When compared to the previous example of the Buddha, the Mañjuśrī has the same almond shaped eyes, widely set apart and appearing almost to be set into the side of the head as can be seen clearly in a profile view of these figures. The curved outline of the lips and smiling expression are also similar to the previous example. Once again, the facial features are large in proportion to the size of the face and appear to be barely circumscribed by the outline of the face. The Sārnāth features of this sculpture may be seen in comparison to the stone figure of a goddess, perhaps Tārā or Bhṛkuṭī.<sup>8</sup> Although Tārā/Bhṛkuṭī probably dates from the post-Gupta period at Sārnāth (around the 7th century), the forms of her body, facial features and even jewelry are clearly derived from late 5th century types. The Mañjuśrī Kumāra is similarly slender to the Sārnāth figure, wears nearly identical earrings and has comparable curls of hair along his forehead. Thus, the Mañjuśrī Kumāra was also probably executed in the late 7th or early 8th century and again shows the early dependence on Sārnāth types at Nālandā.

A number of other sculptures from Nālandā may be dated to this period because of their resemblance to the image of Sarvvāṇī of the Khadga dynasty (Fig. 26). One example, selected from numerous similar pieces, documents this quite well, a figure of Avalokiteśvara seated upon a lotus pedestal and surrounded by an ovoid *prabhāmaṇḍala* (Fig. 162). The same slim figure type of the previous examples may be seen along with the prominent facial features. The presence of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* and lotus seat form a basis of comparison to the Khadga Sarvvāṇī. Although the Nālandā *prabhāmaṇḍala* differs in shape from that in the dated image and also lacks the small openings for inset gems, the flame and bead motif is present in both cases and the relative spacing of these elements is similar. Like the Khadga Sarvvāṇī, the Nālandā example does not fill the entire space of the *prabhāmaṇḍala*. Instead, a flower and leaf motif has been used to bridge the gap between the figure and the rim, almost as if the craftsman was unsure of the strength of the medium in which he was working and had to increase support in certain areas. While the specific elements used in the Nālandā piece are considerably different from those in the image of Sarvvāṇī, the spatial concept is the same since the added elements serve as struts to the *prabhāmaṇḍala*. In addition, the shape of the lotus petals in the image of the Nālandā Bodhisattva is very similar to that seen in the Khadga Sarvvāṇī as the rounded forms come to a slightly upturned point at the ends. The space between the top layer of petals is filled with the tips of a layer of petals beneath. The shape and form of the lotuses seen here is a main feature of 7th-8th century metal images at Nālandā and may be identified in many other examples, often in combination with the *prabhāmaṇḍala* type seen here. The form of the lotus petals, however, does seem to continue for a long time and appears as late as the early 11th century.<sup>9</sup>

The similarity of the *prabhāmaṇḍalas*, lotus petals and even figure style in images of this period from Nālandā does not, however, imply that they are part of a set. Since the

sculptures vary in size and scale and take numerous iconographic forms, it is more likely that they are simply all the product of a common stylistic idiom or workshop.

Dating from around the same period, perhaps the late 7th or 8th century, is a representation of a Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā* seated upon a throne (Fig. 163). The resemblance between this image and the preceding example is evident from a comparison of the facial features, similarly slender body types, the use of the leaf and flower above the heads of the figures and the bead and intermittent flame motif of the halo or *prabhāmaṇḍala*. Contrasted to slightly later sculptures from the reign of Devapāla during the 9th century, such as the dated images of Pañcika and Hārītī from Nālandā (Figs. 28-29), the composition of the Buddha image is much less integrated and unified in appearance and the figure less compact. Comparable elements, such as the leogryphs at the sides of the thrones, the structure and proportion of the thrones, the lions at the corners of the throne bases, the halos and others, are clearly different in form. Some elements, such as the flower and leaf motif in the halo (or *prabhāmaṇḍala*) of earlier figures, seem to have disappeared completely by the 9th century. In the Hārītī image, the bead and flame which had been combined into a single linear arrangement in earlier pieces is now separated into two bands, a feature which becomes quite common in metal sculpture around this date. In the Pañcika image, the bead motif is not used at all in the halo; instead, a tightly arranged sequence of flames occurs.

The more diffused spatial arrangement of the late 7th-8th century metal images from Nālandā may be compared to the Khadga Sarvvāṇī, and appears to have been a general feature of metal pieces just prior to the emergence of the Pāla dynasty. Along with the almost bulbous appearing, over-sized facial features and rather schematized bodies, these features suggest an experimental stage in which attempts were being made to integrate a variety of iconographic and decorative elements and master the techniques of metal craftsmanship at the same time. However, the relative abundance of sculptures from Nālandā of this approximate period suggests that there was a great deal of artistic activity at the time and that this period may have been one of the very productive ones in Nālandā's history.

Interestingly, it is difficult to trace a stage in Nālandā metal sculpture between the late 7th-8th century forms just discussed and those of the reign of Devapāla in the 9th century from the surviving examples. Yet, as in the case of the earlier group, enough pieces survive from the Devapāla stage to suggest that, perhaps after a brief period of inactivity, another florescence occurred. The problem of whether Devapāla himself had much to do with the patronage of art at Nālandā or not has already been discussed.<sup>10</sup> However, regardless of the personal involvement of the Pāla ruler, during the 9th century, the Nālandā metal craftsmen achieved a technical proficiency as well as a maturity of design-making. This can be demonstrated from the dated works of that period (Figs. 28-30), as well as examples which may be dated to that time on the basis of style, such as the few illustrated here (Figs. 164-168). The essential stylistic similarities of these pieces are obvious, in spite of some variations and distinctions. The faces, figure styles, treatment of the jewelry, halos and lotus petals of the two representations of Avalokiteśvara especially (Figs. 164-165) are so close that they are certainly products of the same time and place. Differences in the specific detailing of the belts or arm-bands or other features are within

<sup>8</sup> Rosenfield, "Dated Carvings," fig. 8.

<sup>9</sup> See Fig. 62.

<sup>10</sup> See pp. 108-9 above.

the acceptable limits for contemporaneous images and ones which were made in the same workshop, perhaps even by the same individual.<sup>11</sup> The two Bodhisattvas are still slender, yet their bodies are more compact and less elongated than those of earlier figures and their facial features appear less bulbous, more refined than their late 7th-8th century counterparts. On the whole, the figures, faces and compositions as well as specific elements are comparable to the dated metal pieces from the reign of Devapāla, such as Figs. 28-29. In particular, the representations of the thrones, halos with their separate bead and flame bands, and overall configurations and proportions of the Avalokiteśvara image in Fig. 165 and the Hārītī (Fig. 29) are almost identical, detail for detail.

At first glance, it might appear that the unidentified Bodhisattva (Fig. 166) is of a different date. However, in spite of the relatively crowded appearance created by the presence of six arms, instead of two, as well as the deep shadows behind the open spaces of the work which occur in this photograph, the figure, his facial features, costume and jewelry may be seen as variations on these elements of the two preceding examples. Essentially, the halos and thrones are also made up of similarly created forms.

A new motif, one which has not been discussed thus far, seems to appear during the 9th century as seen in two representations of seated Buddhas (Figs. 167-168), which were selected from a number of rather similar images. The new motif, a row of *cakras* on the halos, suggests a third stage, although not necessarily a later one, in the development of the halo motifs. In the first stage, seen on the late 7th-8th century works (Figs. 160, 162-163), a bead and intermittent flame pattern was used in a single band around the halo or *prabhāmaṇḍala*. The second stage is marked by the separation of these two elements into two bands (Figs. 29, 164-166). Here, the *cakra* has been added as a third band of decoration. Undoubtedly, the *cakras* as well as the beads and flames have iconographic meanings and purposes in the scheme of the halo/*prabhāmaṇḍala*. However, since these elements also seem to combine, separate, appear and disappear in the art at certain approximate times, they may be viewed as having chronological and stylistic implications as well. It is unclear whether the addition of the *cakras* marks a later period of production than the reign of Devapāla since certain features, such as the throne in Fig. 167, show little change from the Devapāla period works. The lotus petals in Fig. 168, with their central ridge, are not dissimilar to those of the dated Pañcika (Fig. 28), although those in the dated image are more worn. And thus, on a stylistic basis, in spite of the addition of the *cakras*, the sculptures of this group appear to be of the 9th century, perhaps early-to-mid-9th century. By this date, certain features, such as the smaller curls of the Buddha's hair compared to earlier examples (Fig. 163), are well established at Nālandā. A few more unusual characteristics, such as the flaring drapery of the sleeves in Fig. 167 occur in several metal and stone sculptures of the Pāla period but do not seem to be related to either chronological or geographical factors.

The florescence of metal sculpture during the reign of Devapāla at Nālandā, based on both the quality of work and the number of extant examples, roughly coincides with a high point in the history of the Śailendra dynasty of what is now Indonesia.<sup>12</sup> Further, many pieces from Java and Sumatra dating from this period are notable in their resemblance to Nālandā images, as has been suggested extensively in both scholarly and popular

<sup>11</sup> See the discussion above (pp. 52-53) on the two Vasudhārās (Figs. 45-46) from Kurkihār, which are identical in date and provenance but have a number of minor differences.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 109 above.

literature.<sup>13</sup> The association between the monastery of Nālandā and the somewhat distant islands is well known, at least through the contribution of King Bālaputradeva during Devapāla's reign, but whether this gift actually stimulated an increase in production at Nālandā at the time or not remains conjectural, since it is, of course, possible that the apparent predominance of metal images from this period is due in part to the vagaries of excavation and survival rather than to conscious choices made centuries ago.

At first glance, a representation of Cuṇḍā<sup>14</sup> seated atop a lotus pedestal which is being held up by *nāgas* would seem to be of a later Pāla date due to its iconographic complexity as well as the apparent facility with which this rather detailed image was cast (Fig. 169). However, close examination of some of the stylistic characteristics suggest that it was executed not much later than the reign of Devapāla, perhaps the late 9th century. The facial features, head-dress and double-strand necklace worn by the central figure are so similar to those elements of the Nālandā image of Balarāma, presumably dated in the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 30) as to suggest that there might be very little time difference between the two. However, the form of the lotus petals and especially the *prabhāmaṇḍala* behind Cuṇḍā differ from what we have defined as Devapāla period characteristics, and perhaps suggest a later date for this sculpture. While the flame and bead motifs are present in the two outer bands of the halo, two additional motifs (a row of *vajras* placed end to end) and another motif (which is unidentified) are also in evidence. Although these cannot be traced to a dated image, the *vajras* especially generally occur on images which may be dated with some certainty to the later Pāla period. The lotus petals in this sculpture basically consist of elements which have been seen before in 9th century examples, although not necessarily in combination. The upper row of petals is similar to those seen in Figs. 164, 165 and 168, while the lower row is essentially like those of the Nālandā Balarāma (Fig. 30), except that these are larger in proportion to the entire image and also, are depicted in a much more regularized fashion. However, the double-outlined form with the slightly upturned tip may be considered to some degree comparable. In any case, the lotus petals do not resemble what must be defined as later Pāla period types at Nālandā (Fig. 171). Thus, although a post-Devapāla period date may be suggested for this sculpture, it is probable that the image was made no later than the late 9th century.

A second image, depicting Trailokavijaya, is slightly more problematic (Fig. 170) especially when compared to a third, closely related image, showing Mahāvairocana (Fig. 171). The figure of Trailokavijaya shares certain characteristics with numerous 9th century images from Nālandā. The facial features, jewelry, and representation of the head-band as it curves along the forehead are very similar to those features in the Balarāma presumably from the reign of Devapāla. The lotus petals of the pedestal in this sculpture are typical for what we have seen in several images dating from the 9th century. However, this image also has several points of comparison with the Mahāvairocana (Fig. 171) which almost certainly dates from a later period. Not only are the facial features, shapes of the head-dress, head-band and jewelry similar, but other elements such as the representation

<sup>13</sup> Some authors have even contended that the works found at Nālandā were of Javanese manufacture, although this cannot be supported in light of today's extensive knowledge about Pāla period art. For a summary of such views, see Bernet-Kempers, *Bronzes of Nalanda*, pp. 10-12.

<sup>14</sup> For the identification of this goddess as Cuṇḍā, see J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "The Paṭṭikera Cuṇḍā and Variations of Her Image," in *Nalini Kanta Bhattacharya Commemoration Volume*, ed. A. B. M. Habibullah (Dacca: Dacca Museum, 1966), pp. 119-43, especially pp. 129-31 and pl. XX.



of the drapery in front of the thrones are nearly identical. The gilding which occurs on Mahāvairocana is not a chronological factor since many images of different periods from Nālandā were gilded. However, the elaborate lotus petals with their complicated incised lines are a feature which must be considered part of the later sculptural developments at Nālandā as well as other sites. Thus, while the Mahāvairocana may date from approximately the 11th century, it is more difficult to place the image of Trailokavijaya since it shares features of both 9th and 11th century sculpture, suggesting a possible transitional date of 10th century. It is apparent that the human figure has undergone only very minor transformations in this sculptural development, yet new features continued to be added.

The sculptural development defined above encompasses the majority of images found at Nālandā thus far, each of which may be assigned a proper context with a certain degree of ease. However, several examples showing entirely different workmanship, style and aesthetics have been found at the site. In some cases, these images relate to ones which have been found in the Gaya District, such as at Kurkihār, and until further evidence concerning their place of manufacture is forthcoming, it must be assumed that these images were brought to Nālandā from other places after they were made or that a style related to them had somehow appeared at Nālandā for a rather limited duration.

The most significant group of such sculptures because of their numbers (there are about a dozen which have been found) includes representations of Buddhas in various poses. To the present, depictions of other subjects have not been found at Nālandā in this style. Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of these sculptures is the fact that the Buddha is not represented as a youth as had been seen previously, but rather, as an adult male (Figs. 172-173). The body of the Buddha appears solid and heavy and somewhat elongated while his face is rounder compared to the representations we have seen earlier from the Nālandā metal tradition. Indeed, even though these images are not necessarily much larger than those of the previous style group, they are more monumental in appearance. For example, Fig. 172 is only 18.4 cm. in height while Fig. 163 is 29.2 cm., including the halo. And yet, the effect of the smaller image is decidedly more weighty, solid and heavy.

The sculptures which are made in this style seem to date from the later Pāla period on the basis of comparison to images from other sites (Fig. 191) where the Buddha is seen as a similarly matured male figure. Further, the lotus petals in these examples, particularly Fig. 173, belong to the later stylistic developments of Magadha metal images. Thus, the petals in Fig. 172 are comparable, but not identical, to those seen in the three dated sculptures from Kurkihār from the reign of Vīgrahapāla (Figs. 69-71) of the third quarter of the 11th century, with slight variations, or to the slightly more complicated forms seen in stone sculpture (Fig. 73) but not thus far in metal. One last stylistic feature of these images should be noted. In the standing representations, such as Fig. 173, the hem of the Buddha's robe is very heavily outlined and elaborately pleated. This is also seen on some images from Kurkihār, such as the three pieces dated in the reign of Vīgrahapāla (Figs. 69-71), thus again corroborating both an 11th century (or later) date for this sculptural type, as well as general stylistic resemblance to Gaya District sculptures.

Since so few images of this type have been found at Nālandā, it is not possible to state whether they represent the output of a workshop which emerged in the later Pāla period at Nālandā and was closely related to those at other sites, or whether the images were transported to Nālandā after their production elsewhere. Since the sculptures do not exactly match those found at other Magadhan sites in terms of style, it is indeed possible that

they do represent a tradition indigenous to Nālandā although clearly related to the developments at other sites during the 11th and 12th centuries.

Compared to the apparently prolific output in metal images of the late 7th-9th centuries at Nālandā, the later Pāla period works are in a minority. While there is clearly not a decline in craftsmanship, as can be seen from splendid examples such as the Mahāvairocana (Fig. 171), there seems to have been production of fewer images. The reasons for this are unclear, but it may be that large monastic units were no longer being constructed at the site in numbers and, thus, there was not as great a need to produce so many images. In any case, it is necessary to look at materials from other Pāla period sites to more thoroughly understand the later developments of metal casting in Bihar.

#### THE GAYA DISTRICT

##### *Kurkihār*

The famous hoard of 226 metal pieces consisting of approximately 150 images and numerous *chattras*, bells and fragments along with one small crystal *stūpa*, was discovered by chance in 1930 when villagers were quarrying for bricks among the ruins of Kurkihār monastery, a practice that had continued perhaps for centuries. The goods had been packed in two large earthen jars, possibly in an effort to save them from invading Muslims or for another reason unknown to us today. More than half of the pieces bear inscriptions and nine of these are dated, as has been seen in Chapter 3.<sup>15</sup> Because of these dated examples, it is possible to assign the majority of the images in this hoard to a fairly stringent chronology although it is not possible to state for certain that all of the works are necessarily of Kurkihār manufacture. In fact, it may be hypothesized that some of the pieces are actually from other sites, having been brought to Kurkihār by various means. Several of the images are inscribed with the names of donors who had come from Kāñcī (Conjeevaram) in South India, although in this case, the images seem to be the products of the Kurkihār workshop. Since the icons donated by pilgrims from Kāñcī are of different styles and periods, they apparently represent a continued interaction rather than one particular time of contact between the two places.

At present, nearly all of the images found in the Kurkihār hoard are located in the Patna Museum, although a few of them (supposedly made of solid silver) apparently disappeared shortly after their discovery and never made their way to the museum. Occasional reports of stray images, most now in private collections, have also occurred. The images range in size from a few centimeters in height to about two meters and are primarily Buddhist in subject matter. Many depict the Buddha wearing a crown and necklace and numerous images show what might be called esoteric Buddhist forms. Like other north Indian metal pieces (as opposed to south Indian ones) these icons are usually hollow cast except in the case of the very small pieces, which are solid.

The images appear to comprise an arbitrary assortment of pieces, ranging in date from the 8th to the 12th centuries. They should not necessarily be considered indicative of all of the developments in metal image-making at Kurkihār since it is not known for what reasons they were selected to be buried together, and whether they really may be con-

<sup>15</sup> Figs. 31, 44-47, 61, 69-71.

sidered representative of the site. The majority of images from this hoard date from the 10th to the 12th centuries in contrast to the Nālandā bronzes, which date primarily from the late 7th through the 9th centuries. While it cannot be stated definitely that the Kurkihār metal sculpting tradition continued where Nālandā images left off as a result of an actual shift in casting centers, it is interesting to note that all of the early (i.e. 8th century) images from Kurkihār display strong similarities to Nālandā forms. Interestingly, the Buddha type of Figs. 172-173 occurs more popularly at Kurkihār.<sup>16</sup> However, it does not seem likely that the stylistic influence went the other direction, that is, with Kurkihār serving as the model for Nālandā, since there is no evidence so far that Kurkihār was as early a center as Nālandā. Also, Nālandā was obviously a much larger monastic unit and apparently had a well-developed art tradition by the time Kurkihār came into prominence. It may, therefore, be suggested that contact with Nālandā, whether in the form of transported images or transplanted craftsmen, served as an initial impetus for the metal casting traditions at Kurkihār.

A standing representation of Avalokiteśvara from Kurkihār (Fig. 174) betrays its possible late 7th-8th century Nālandā origin, or manufacture at Kurkihār in a closely related style, since it is virtually identical to a number of excavated Nālandā pieces. When compared to a seated Nālandā Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 162), the similarities are apparent. Without first-hand knowledge of the workmen and workshops active at the two centers (which history has not allowed us), it would be impossible to determine whether these images were made in the same workshop or only in very closely related ones. Thus, while it is not known precisely how this contact was carried out, the visual similarities of the sculptures verify that contact was present.

A representation of the Buddha (Fig. 175) is also quite obvious in its resemblance to sculptures which have been recovered from Nālandā, but which date from the early-to-mid-9th century. The *prabhāmaṇḍala* resembles that in Fig. 164, but the Buddha himself is similar to Fig. 168, although his robe differs. The presence of the leaf and flower design in the *prabhāmaṇḍala* of Fig. 175 is apparently a hold-over from the 8th century, or may indicate a slightly earlier date for the piece, perhaps the late 8th century. Other examples may be cited, but these will suffice to demonstrate the relationship between the two sites.

If, indeed, the Nālandā images, or the craftsmen who produced them, had been brought to Kurkihār to begin a metal casting tradition, the former ties were quickly lost and Kurkihār rapidly asserted its individuality. This rather dramatic departure was already visible in the two images of Balarāma, both presumably from the reign of Devapāla and dating from the early-to-mid-9th century (Figs. 30-31), one of which was from Kurkihār, the other, from Nālandā. While both pieces clearly fall within the stylistic parameters of 9th century Pāla sculpture, numerous differences, which may be attributed to the individuality of the artisans, were easily detected. In the same way, a number of differences may be defined between the Kurkihār and Nālandā developments by comparing several other examples, and by analyzing Kurkihār works in general.

The first demonstration of this may be seen in a representation of Mañjuśrī Kumāra from Kurkihār (Fig. 176). This image was selected from several which are nearly identical in size and in style and most probably were manufactured at one time, in one workshop

and quite possibly as part of the same set.<sup>17</sup> Their probable late 9th or early 10th century date may be determined through their somewhat intermediary position between the works dated in Devapāla's reign and those from the reign of Rājyapāla. For example, the general shape as well as the incised inner line of the lotus petals of the Mañjuśrī Kumāra image resemble those of the Balarāma from Nālandā of the 9th century; however, they are also a feature of 10th century images, such as the dated Vasudhārās from the reign of Rājyapāla of the mid-10th century (Figs. 45-46). The general stance of Mañjuśrī Kumāra is also comparable to that of Balarāma, but his facial features greatly resemble those of the two Vasudhārās. Although not seen in dated metal works until later (Fig. 60), the treatment of the flames of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* finds counterparts in dated stone pieces of the 9th and 10th centuries (Figs. 38, 49). To some extent, the apparent greater resemblance to the Rājyapāla period works is due not just to similarity in date, but to the fact that the two Vasudhārās, like the Mañjuśrī Kumāra, are from Kurkihār. During the 9th and 10th centuries especially, Kurkihār metal images seem to have a soft quality to them, and what might be called a "sense of the wax," meaning that the ways in which the artists worked to create the wax model show through in the final cast result. In making such a statement, caution must be used since, to some extent, the surface and details presently visible in metal works arise from the conditions of their burial or storage over the centuries. However, certain characteristics seem to be present to allow for such analysis.

In contrast to works from Nālandā, for example, where jewelry, head-dresses and other details were often created by using small balls or beads of wax (Figs. 161-162, 164-165), at Kurkihār, such elements are frequently created with a single strand of wax, so that a smoother effect is achieved (Figs. 176, 178). Further, incised lines and stippled dots made in the wax model at Kurkihār to create drapery patterns, lotus petals and even facial features often suggest a sense of a sharp tool being applied to a soft material (Fig. 176) that contrasts to the generally crisper effect achieved in Nālandā works. Other workshop differences between Nālandā and Kurkihār include the fact that the known Kurkihār metal images display much greater use of inlay of different colors of metal to achieve a rich surface throughout the artistic development. While such a practice is, of course, known at Nālandā, it cannot be cited as a main feature of the Nālandā style, while it must be considered a basic element in the artistic repertoire of the Kurkihār metal worker. The representation of Mañjuśrī Kumāra, for example, is one of many of its approximate date from Kurkihār which use silver inlay in the eyes and *ūrṇā*, copper for the lips, and different colors of metal to create a striped effect for the dhoti. In addition, the common practice of drilling the eyeballs in the Kurkihār images often lends them a more expressive appearance than their Nālandā counterparts. Completion of the eyes at Nālandā may have been done with paint, of course, but the drilling or lack of drilling still may be cited as a general difference between the schools. Another point of contrast between the Nālandā and Kurkihār images is the slightly fleshier, weightier appearance of the figures from Kurkihār, such as the Mañjuśrī Kumāra, compared to the more slender body type popular at Nālandā.<sup>18</sup> This increased apparent softness to the Kurkihār bodies, combined with the more flowing, continuous lines of elements such as the jewelry, and a smoother

<sup>16</sup> Compare Figs. 172-173, for example, with P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pl. XXVIII (Arch. 9587 and Arch. 9589).

<sup>17</sup> For similar pieces, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, figs. 237-238.

<sup>18</sup> Compare to Figs. 165-168, 170-171.

quality to the facial features contrasts strongly to the crisp, hard-edged forms seen at Nālandā.

A preference for greater three-dimensional exuberance of form also seems to be present in the Kurkihār works, as was seen in the case of the two Balarāma images, both supposedly dated in the reign of Devapāla.<sup>19</sup> A Buddha in *bhūmiṣparśamudrā* from Kurkihār (Fig. 177) maintains the very richly sculpted, lively surface of the Kurkihār Balarāma (Fig. 31) although it was probably made slightly later, perhaps in the late 9th, or, more probably, the early 10th century. The puffy, almost cloud-like flames around the rim of the halo, for example, find counterparts in dated metal images from Kurkihār of the 10th century reign of Rājyapāla (Figs. 45-48). However, the lotus petals upon which the Buddha sits resemble those seen in the representation of Cuṇḍā from Nālandā (Fig. 169) which may be ascribed to the late 9th century, although this image is unlike the Nālandā example in many other respects. While it is true that the Cuṇḍā is complex in relation to the majority of metal sculptures from Nālandā, its complication arises largely from iconographic elements, such as the multiple arms or the depiction of the lotus lake beneath the seat of the main figure. The four motifs along the perimeter of the halo are strictly confined to their respective rows and are linear rather than rounded forms. Together, they almost blend to create a subtle texture rather than distinctive elements. On the other hand, the Kurkihār image is complicated not only because of the iconographic elements but also due to the stylistic characteristics of the various components. Working together, for example, are the fluid forms of the *kinnaras* with their complicated tails, the *kīrtīmukha* issuing the bodhi tree leaves from its mouth, the various elements of the halo and the scroll pattern of the cross-bar of the throne back to create a very exuberant and open network of elements. In effect, the open forms tend to obviate the geometric shapes of the round halo and the square back of the throne. The contrast to Nālandā workmanship may be seen further against Fig. 167, which is iconographically more akin to the Kurkihār Buddha than the Cuṇḍā. In this Nālandā example, each element of the scheme has its strictly assigned place and an additive rather than organic effect has been achieved.

Several other images found in the Kurkihār hoard are strongly related to the previous Buddha image in both style and iconographic type and yet the variations which occur among these icons attest to the abilities of the artists. While most of these figures show the Buddha seated upon an elaborate throne, one of them represents a female Bodhisattva, Tārā.<sup>20</sup> Even though there would be little point in arguing that there is a significant difference in date between the Tārā and the Buddha images, certain forms, such as the heads at the ends of the cross-bars of the thrones, the leogryphs at the sides of the thrones, the position and forms of the *kinnaras* and even the treatment of the halos, are conceived in different ways. Perhaps the most significant difference between the Buddha illustrated and the Tārā is that Tārā is relatively larger in relation to her throne than is the Buddha.

An image of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara attended by Tārā and Bhṛkuṭī (Fig. 178) illustrates a transitional stage between the exuberance of the Devapāla and post-Devapāla period and the less sumptuous forms of the reign of Rājyapāla, and thus probably dates from the early-to-mid-10th century. Sharing a relative complexity with the dated

Kurkihār image of Balarāma from the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 31) as well as a few of its motifs, such as the tactile flowers and pearls along the exterior of the throne backs, the similar cross-bars of the thrones and elaborate animal forms atop the cross-bars, the Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara is a much scaled down version compared to the Devapāla piece. The image, in fact, shows distinct resemblance to the two metal images of Vasudhārā from Kurkihār dated in the reign of Rājyapāla (Figs. 45-46). The notable comparable features are the cloud-like and flattened flames around the edges of the halos, the rather pointy and angular facial features of the main figures and the flattened ribbons and ornaments from which they issue that were originally intended to decorate the support for the *chattras*.

A second image of Avalokiteśvara shows what must be considered a subsequent development (Fig. 179). While the two Avalokiteśvaras are nearly identical (except for iconographic differences) in their facial features, clothing, jewelry and head-dresses, the elements of the throne in the later piece have become both flattened and simplified. Instead, it appears much more like those seen in dated images from the reign of Rājyapāla (Figs. 47-48), and thus may date from the mid-10th century. Further, the lotus petals beneath the central figure and the cloud-like rim of the halo compare to other works dated in the reign of Rājyapāla (Figs. 45-46).

Several other images may be cited to document this movement away from the ornate qualities of the 9th and early 10th centuries and at the same time point ahead to the exploitation of the flat and linear aspects of form which occurs at the end of the Kurkihār metal development in the 11th and 12th centuries. A number of the images of this date, approximately the reign of Rājyapāla, show a Buddha in *bhūmiṣparśamudrā* adorned with a crown and necklace. Some of these simply show the Buddha seated on a lotus pedestal although others are complete with *prabhāmaṇḍala*, throne, *chattrā* and bodhi tree leaves (Fig. 180). In this example, the resemblance of the Buddha's facial features to those of the two Vasudhārās dated in Rājyapāla's reign (Figs. 45-46) is evident. The lower row of lotus petals of the Buddha's seat compares closely to those of Fig. 46 and the manner of representing the flames of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* appear similar to those in Figs. 45-48, all dated in the reign of Rājyapāla. Although similarities to the dated works from the reign of Rājyapāla clearly exist, this piece and others of this approximate period show a considerable range of variation. This, of course, is to be expected, for even the dated examples themselves display a number of differences. One of the more significant changes in the crowned Buddha image is the use of a double row of lotus petals. Further, the halo behind the head of the Buddha has been incised with a floral pattern, and the lower portion of the pedestal has a raised design, perhaps emulating the sockets which might contain gems in some images.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, while the apparent figure style of the mid-10th century images does not change much, a variety of new elements are introduced in the treatment of the surrounding elements. Using the figure style seen in the dated Rājyapāla metal images as well as minor elements such as the treatment of the lotus petals as controls for chronology, these concur-

<sup>19</sup> See pp. 41-43 above.

<sup>20</sup> Patna Museum accession nos. 9795 and 9811, P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 147. For an illustration, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 241.

<sup>21</sup> Such inset gems, or, more commonly, receptacles to hold gems, occur in metal images of Bihar and Bengal from the 8th-12th centuries. They are rather common at Kurkihār, and, interestingly, fairly rare at Nālandā. In most examples from India, gem stones are absent, either having never been put in or having been lost. The common practice of using gems to ornament the jewelry, throne and other aspects of metal images seen so widely in Nepal and Tibet is almost certainly based on this Indian convention.

rent developments may be dated to this period with some assurance. For example, a representation of a standing Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 181) is remarkable in its stylistic resemblance to the dated images of Vasudhārā from the middle of the 10th century. The facial features are so close that discussion is hardly necessary. The rather diminutive body proportions are also comparable and the general form of the jewelry with the complicated pendants hanging from the necklaces and the spaces for inserted gems also suggest closely related workmanship. The pointed head-dresses, while differing perhaps because of iconography, serve similar aesthetic ends in their relative shapes and sizes as seen on the figures. The lotus petals under Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara's feet are also similar to those seen on Rājyapāla period images. However, the back-slab is different from other metal sculptures we have defined for this period. Instead, the *prabhāmaṇḍala*, with its flame motif along the perimeter, seems to be a continuation of an earlier form (Fig. 176). However, the shape of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* has changed and instead of narrowing at the bottom, it now expands. In addition, the form of the flames themselves has become flatter and more linear. In fact, the angularity of the facial features, the crispness of details of the clothing and jewelry as well as the more two-dimensional appearing *prabhāmaṇḍala* are entirely in keeping with the movement away from the expanding forms of the 9th and early 10th century. Eventually, an even stricter subservience to linear and flat detail such as seen in the three dated Buddha images from the reign of Vighrahapāla (Figs. 69-71) will occur.

Another variation in treatment of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* may be seen on a representation of Tārā (Fig. 182). There is little doubt that this image is contemporaneous with the previous example, ca. mid-10th century, simply because both images bear inscriptions which state that they were offered by the lay worshiper Duvajha,<sup>22</sup> who is most probably the same individual in each case. They are also approximately the same size and the figures themselves are stylistically close; indeed, it is possible that they once formed part of a set. The *prabhāmaṇḍala* of Tārā differs significantly from others we have seen since the flame motifs are a continuous row of teardrop-shaped openings probably meant to hold gems. Also, behind the head of the main figure, a halo which consists of a large flower radiates out from the center.

Similar settings for gems are used in a unique sculpture showing the Buddha in *bhūmisparśamudrā* wearing crown and necklace, seated under the bodhi tree, but within an architectural setting (Fig. 183). The Buddha and his ornaments recall others already discussed and the lotus petals as well are the standard forms for Rājyapāla period images, and thus the work probably also dates from the mid-10th century.<sup>23</sup>

A standing figure of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 184) may be used to demonstrate one of the intermediary stages between the Rājyapāla period formulations of the mid-10th century and the very sleek and mannered style marked by the dated works of the reign of Vighrahapāla (III) in the third quarter of the 11th century (Figs. 69-71). If the Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara is compared to an image from the mid-10th century (Fig. 181) as well as

the Vighrahapāla images, the transitional phase becomes apparent. The figure of the Bodhisattva may be viewed as a strict continuation of the Rājyapāla period style, except for an increased height and slenderness, leading to a more elegant form. The facial features are more refined and delicate, the small dots making up the pattern of his garment are more controlled and subtle, the jewelry is less heavy and thick and even the lotus held in the upper left hand is more crisply conceived. Perhaps one of the most significant changes, however, is the decrease in the relative importance of the head-dress along with an increase in the prominence of the *jaṭāmukuta*. This exchange in emphasis between the two elements carries into the 11th and 12th century Kurkihār Bodhisattva forms. The *prabhāmaṇḍala* has not changed in shape although the flames along the perimeter are slightly flatter and more two-dimensional in form. The lower row of lotus petals upon which the Bodhisattva stands is similar to that of the earlier example. When compared to the Vighrahapāla period crowned Buddhas, it may be seen that the work does not have the sleekness and elegance of form of the mid-to-late 11th century although the image shows advancement from the Rājyapāla period style. The main differences are in the form of the flames of the *prabhāmaṇḍala*, the ribbons at the top of the aura, the facial features, body forms, drapery and even the treatment of the pedestal which lacks the many divisions into horizontal courses. The Avalokiteśvara, therefore, may be dated to the late 10th or first part of the 11th century on the basis of its relationships to both earlier and later forms.

The three metal pieces from Kurkihār dated in the reign of Vighrahapāla (III) in the third quarter of the 11th century may be viewed as a stylistic watershed. On the one hand, they represent a culmination of the tendencies to depict form with line rather than modelled shapes of the 10th century and to create works of great elegance and refinement. On the other hand, in the century following the production of these images, greater elaboration and sculptural richness will be seen. Thus, while the figure of a Buddha itself does not differ dramatically from the Vighrahapāla period images, the *prabhāmaṇḍala* on an icon from Kurkihār (Fig. 185) indicates its later date. The increased complexity of the lotus petals beneath the Buddha's feet corroborate this as well. The flames of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* are now floriated, complicated forms, each having a place in which to hold a gem. What was once a solid, plain inner rim of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* is now a pierced design, giving a sort of lattice effect. The elaborate *kīrttimukha* and ribbons at the top of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* add further complication to the overall effect. While a dated metal example from a period later than the Vighrahapāla (III) images is not known, from corroboration with stone sculptures it can be seen that this complication of form is characteristic of the 12th century and on that basis, a 12th century date for this icon may be suggested. A second example shows the Buddha, this time uncrowned, in a similar setting although in this case, the design on the inner rim of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* is incised and not pierced through (Fig. 186). The *chattra* which is still present in this piece suggests what might have been the original effect of many similar images which have now lost this element. The Buddha himself stands rigidly with his garment appearing almost like a suit of armor as the concentric folds seem to constrict rather than drape his body. Once again, the elaborate forms of the lotus petals as well as the multiple vertical and horizontal divisions of the pedestal are suggestive of a late Pāla date, or approximately the 12th century.

The culmination of the development of the Bodhisattva image at Kurkihār may be seen in a perfectly preserved gilt bronze representation of Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 187). While the basic iconography is a simple two-armed form of Avalokiteśvara, the depiction itself marks

<sup>22</sup> P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 139, 146.

<sup>23</sup> One of the most impressive works from this period is the large *prabhāmaṇḍala* with seven scenes of the Buddha's life represented along its rim (Patna Museum accession no. 9625, P. L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 132). The figures of the Buddhas are similar to other crowned Buddhas from this period, and the figure of Queen Māyā giving birth resembles the dated Vasudhārās from the reign of Rājyapāla. For an illustration, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 249.

the final achievement of Magadhan metal casting. The head-dress, flowers and jewelry are cast with a precision and refinement that indicate the stylistic and technical changes which had evolved over the centuries and suggests that at the time of Kurkihār's presumed demise with the onslaught of the Muslims, an artistic peak was in evidence. In many respects, this image relates to icons made in Nepal and Tibet after the 12th century and, thus, a piece such as this may be regarded as both the end of the tradition on Indian soil and the beginning of another in the Himalayan regions. Because of the complicated lotus leaves, the accented posture and stylization of the facial features, this image probably dates from the 12th century.

A few metal images from Kurkihār do not fit into the above sequence with any ease, suggesting, perhaps, that they are the products of other workshops. Some are found singly among the known pieces retrieved from Kurkihār, not in multiples, a fact which may indicate that they had been brought to the site from another place of manufacture. However, one type of image may have been a local product, since nearly two dozen pieces belonging to this style category have been found at Kurkihār. Many of the pieces are approximately the same height, about 6-7 cm. and, because they are stylistically related and iconographically compatible as well, this suggests that they might once have formed part of a large *maṇḍala* or other iconographic set. Selected from these works is an image of Tārā (Fig. 188). These figures may be attributed to the period of Mahīpāla I, ca. 11th century, by comparison to the sculptures which were found at Imādpur dated in this Pāla ruler's reign (Figs. 62-63). Although rather crude by comparison to the Imādpur pieces, the Kurkihār examples share many similarities with them. In the case of the Tārā sculpture, related features include the form of the necklaces of the female goddesses in Fig. 63, to a certain extent their head-dresses, and even their facial features except for the rendering of the eyes. These metal castings, while taking their place among the Magadha art styles quite easily, are somewhat a puzzle in relation to the Kurkihār trends that have been defined thus far. Yet, because so many of them were found at Kurkihār (a phenomenon which could also be explained simply because they were part of a set and might thus have been transported as such), they may indeed represent a valid Kurkihār style. Their relative crudeness (even allowing for their small size, which I do not personally believe is a factor since some exquisitely executed miniatures survive from Kurkihār) sets them apart from the traditions otherwise defined.

The Kurkihār metal casting tradition, like that of Nālandā, must be ranked as one of the most important and impressive in all of South Asia. Not only were many of the works produced there superior examples of metal working techniques, but the range of iconographic forms and styles is also significant. While related to other Magadhan sculptural traditions of the same period, the Kurkihār works are also distinctive, indicating that active groups of craftsmen at the site were maintained.

#### *An Isolated Image*

By far the majority of metal images from Magadha of the Pāla period that have been discovered thus far are from Nālandā, with Kurkihār yielding the next largest amount. However, R. D. Banerji has published one sculpture which was discovered "near Gayā"<sup>24</sup> and recently, two hoards of metal pieces were found at the village of Fatehpur in

<sup>24</sup> *EISMS*, p. 50 and pl. LXVIc.

the Gaya District. The image published by Banerji, the present location of which is unknown to me, shows the Buddha, uncrowned, with his right hand in *bhūmiśpaśamudrā*. Banerji has read the inscription which is located on the base plate of the image to say that it was dedicated at Gayā by a Rāṇaka named Yakṣapāla<sup>25</sup> and he further claims that the inscription is written in *bhaikṣukī lipi*,<sup>26</sup> the secret Buddhist script. However, it is not the contents but the location of the inscription on the image which is of interest here. All of the inscribed images previously discussed have had the writing either on the pedestal, the back, the lotus petals, etc. but none has had its inscription on a base plate. The images so far have not even had base plates but have either been solid cast or have been hollow and left open at the bottom. The use of a base plate is a very common feature in Tibetan metal sculptures whereby small dedications are placed within the hollow cast image and then the icon is sealed with the plate. However, besides this instance, there is no other example in India which has come to my attention which makes use of this practice. One of the significant features of this image, then, is that it may provide proof that the Tibetan dedicatory practice had its origin in India, or, conversely, may suggest Himalayan influence in India. The style of the image resembles the preceding icon from Kurkihār except in the facial characteristics, giving evidence of metal casting schools in the Gaya District apart from the major school at Kurkihār although obviously related to it.

#### *Fatehpur*

Fatehpur, located in Gaya District approximately 32 kilometers east of Gayā town and about 20 kilometers from Kurkihār, has recently been brought to light because of the antiquities which have been discovered there. In 1968,<sup>27</sup> a hoard of metal images was discovered, some of which are illustrated here.<sup>28</sup> A second hoard was apparently unearthed there more recently.<sup>29</sup> In addition, I have seen a few metal pieces in undocumented circumstances which are of this general style and which may have originated at Fatehpur.<sup>30</sup> These sculptures offer distinct evidence of the existence of schools of metal casting throughout Magadha during the Pāla period which were highly individual and not particularly derivative of the more well known Magadhan centers such as Nālandā and Kurkihār. Once again, since these works were found in hoards, they may represent a random collection of pieces. However, from the stylistic evidence, it appears that they are all of the late Pāla period although not necessarily a single date, and a number of them appear to be products of a single workshop.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50. Also see Chapter 3, n. 217 for an individual named Yakṣapāla.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* Banerji refers the reader to a discussion of this inscription in Cecil Bendall, "An Inscription in a Buddhistic Variety of Nail-Headed Characters," *Ind. Ant.* XIX (Mar. 1890):77-78.

<sup>27</sup> The late curator of the Bodh Gayā Museum, Dr. J. P. Saxena, informed me that the hoard was acquired around 1968. I am grateful to Dr. Saxena for having extended me every courtesy on my visits to the Bodh Gayā Museum.

<sup>28</sup> For publication of the entire hoard, see Susan L. Huntington, "Some Bronzes from Fatehpur, Gaya," *Or. Art*, n.s. XXV, 2 (Summer 1979):240-47.

<sup>29</sup> Bhagwant Sahai, "The Bronzes from Fatehpur," *JBPP* I (1977):173-86. Sahai does not mention the date of discovery of this hoard. These pieces are in the Gayā Museum and are clearly related in style to the works in the 1968 hoard. I believe the hoard was discovered after the one I published because it was not known at the time of my last visit to Gayā, at which time the Bodh Gayā Museum pieces had already been collected.

<sup>30</sup> For example, the British Museum has in its collection a metal image of Maitreya (accession no. 1956-12-10,1), which is very similar to several of the documented Fatehpur pieces.



Both Buddhist and Brahmanical sculptures have been found at Fatehpur, although the Buddhist images are in the majority, and in general seem to be of a slightly better quality in terms of craftsmanship. It is difficult to say whether the Buddhist and Brahmanical pieces represent a single stylistic idiom, for while they share certain features in common, the different formats and arrangements of elements in the Buddhist versus the Brahmanical pieces create the appearance of certain differences, which may or may not be stylistic. The Buddhist images have a great degree of homogeneity, as do the Brahmanical pieces, as a group.

One of the smaller metal pieces from Fatehpur is a figure of Maitreya shown seated atop a double lotus pedestal in *mahārājāṭīlāsana* (Fig. 189). A rather elaborate image in spite of its small size, the sculpture was probably made in the 12th century as may be determined by its almost startling resemblance to the dated stone Avalokiteśvara from the reign of Gopāla (III) (Fig. 76). Aside from the obvious similarities created by the fact that both images depict seated Bodhisattvas, the almost identical treatment of the lotus seats, the poses of the figures, their head-dresses and even their facial features are remarkably alike. The row of large beads, presumably pearls, along the base of the lotus pedestal seems to have been especially popular at Fatehpur and is seen in several of the images from that site. The facial features are broad and slit-like, and also differ from the styles of metal sculptures found at other Magadhan sites thus far. In all, there is little chance that the piece would be mistaken for one from Nālandā or Kurkihār, although it fits easily into the expected stylistic parameters of late eastern Indian metal casting. Since so many of the Fatehpur pieces exhibit features of this distinctive style, it may be suggested that the works represent a previously unidentified workshop, whether or not they were actually made at Fatehpur.

Another image of Maitreya (Fig. 190) is considerably larger than the preceding piece, measuring some 21.8 cm. in height as opposed to 6.6 cm. In this case, the Bodhisattva sits atop a very high and elaborate throne. In some respects, this figure may be compared to the gilt bronze image of Avalokiteśvara from Kurkihār (Fig. 187), suggesting that it too was made in the 12th century. Both show similarly angular and accentuated postures, stylized facial features and comparable virtuosity and confidence in dealing with the metal medium as various elements of the head-dresses and attributes held in the hands extend away from the main body of the image. However, the high platform upon which the Fatehpur Bodhisattva sits is unlike anything found thus far in other Pāla period metal sculptures. Since the throne clearly relates to that of a Buddha image from Fatehpur (Fig. 191), it may be suggested that it represents a local subtype.

In the case of the Buddha image (Fig. 191), a 12th century date may be suggested not only on the basis of the style of the piece, but because of the paleography of its inscription.<sup>31</sup> The high throne, although lacking the platform seen under the Maitreya image, suggests a late Pāla period date as does the elaborate treatment of the petals and foliate motifs. An unusual feature of this sculpture is the animal mask, perhaps part of an animal skin, directly below the Buddha in the center of the seat. Although this piece is well within the stylistic limits of the Fatehpur hoard, and Magadhan trends in general, it also bears a striking resemblance to a number of metal sculptures from Burma dating from the

same approximate period.<sup>32</sup> It is likely that this relationship is much more than simple coincidence since there is inscriptional evidence to support contact between the Gaya District and Burma. An inscription at Prome Shwéhsan-daw pagoda (Burma) states that King Kyanzittha helped to rebuild and sustain the Vajrāsana temple (Mahābodhi) at Bodh Gayā shortly before 1098 A.D.<sup>33</sup> Since Fatehpur is not far from Bodh Gayā, it is likely that they were associated in some way. It is a well-accepted premise that Burmese Buddhist art is strongly derivative of Pāla art, including painting, sculpture and even architecture, and it is likely that this contact was partly carried out in the manner described in the inscription. It is thus possible that the few known images from Fatehpur are indicative of a larger style complex in vogue during the late 11th and early 12th centuries in the Gaya area, as evidenced by the stylistically dependent Burmese forms. In this context, it is significant to note that it is no longer meaningful to say simply that "Pāla" influence was felt in Burma, Nepal, Indonesia and other regions outside of India since very specific types of contact seem to have occurred. Thus, while Java and Sumatra were in contact with Nālandā as noted by the Devapāla period inscription<sup>34</sup> as well as by the distinctly similar art styles of Nālandā and Indonesian metal sculptures, contact between Burma and Pāla India occurred at Bodh Gayā where the Burmese made frequent repairs and reconstructions throughout history and as evidenced by the apparent similarities between the Bodh Gayā and Burmese art styles.

Perhaps the finest of the Brahmanical images yet discovered at Fatehpur is a representation of Viṣṇu accompanied by Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī (Fig. 192). At first glance, the piece recalls the Viṣṇu group from Mandoil dating from the 4th year of Vīgrahapāla (III), ca. 3rd quarter of the 11th century (Fig. 68). However, the Fatehpur piece may be a bit later, dating perhaps to the 12th century, for several reasons. The lotus petals of Viṣṇu's pedestal, though not doubled, are similar to those in the Maitreya previously discussed (Fig. 189), which almost certainly dates from the 12th century by comparison to the dated sculpture from the reign of Gopāla (III). Further, the two consorts of Viṣṇu in the Fatehpur piece betray much more of the hardened stylization of the latest phases of Pāla sculpture in their angular bodies, somewhat stiff postures and huge earrings, in contrast to the women in the Mandoil piece, which show much more of the grace and elegance of a slightly earlier date. Contrast to works of the 11th century, and specifically the reign of Vīgrahapāla (III) may be seen further by examining the dated Buddhas from that period (Figs. 69-71), for here it becomes clear that the Fatehpur piece betrays little of the elegance and linear quality of the earlier period. Instead, the flames around the *prabhāmaṇḍala* seem highly three-dimensional as does the decoration of the figures themselves. The Fatehpur piece, like that from Mandoil, is enhanced through the use of different colors of metal inlay, a technique which became increasingly popular in the later Pāla period and eventually in Tibet and other countries. The paleography of the inscription on the back of this image<sup>35</sup> again corroborates a 12th century date for the work.

<sup>32</sup> For very clear comparative material, see G. H. Luce, *Old Burma-Early Pagan*, 3 vols., *Artibus Asiae Supplementum*, XXV (New York, 1970), vol. III, pls. 429c; 437c, d, e; 440a, b, etc.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, I:62-63.

<sup>34</sup> See p. 109 above.

<sup>35</sup> The inscription is again donative. For an illustration and the text and translation, see Huntington, "Some Bronzes," p. 245, fig. 11.

<sup>31</sup> The inscription is purely donative. For a text and translation, see Huntington, "Some Bronzes," p. 240. I am grateful to Dr. P. L. Gupta for having transcribed and read the Fatehpur inscriptions for me.

In all, it may be suggested that the finds at Fatehpur are of an intriguing nature. They indicate a high level of craftsmanship and display a number of features which do not find precise counterparts at other Bihar and Bengal sites, at least as far as is presently known.

#### ANĠA

##### THE BHAGALPUR DISTRICT

A number of metal images have been found in the Bhagalpur District at sites such as Pātharghātā, Antichak and Sultāngaṇj. However, unlike Nālandā and Kurkihār which have yielded substantial bodies of material, Bhagalpur District offers more or less isolated examples which do not give a complete picture of stylistic developments in this region of eastern Bihar.

##### Sultāngaṇj

The site of Sultāngaṇj has already been mentioned as the place where the over life-sized metal representation of a standing Buddha weighing over a ton had been found during railway excavations in the 19th century.<sup>36</sup> This image (Fig. 193), found in a large hall associated with the ruins of a Buddhist monastery, has stimulated numerous debates since the time of its discovery as scholars have assigned it to dates ranging from the Gupta period<sup>37</sup> to the early Pāla period.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, the heavy dependence on Sārnāth Gupta prototypes for many Pāla metal images, especially those of Nālandā, contributes to the confusion. Furthermore, since background elements, *prabhāmaṇḍala* and lotus petals are lacking in this representation, very few details are left upon which to base scholarly judgements. However, the crispness of the facial features and slight angularity to the nose, ears and even the eyes and lips (clearly seen in profile views of the image) relate this sculpture to the black stone head recovered from Sultāngaṇj (Fig. 154). Because of its similarities to post-Guptan styles manifested at Rājgir and Nālandā, this head was assigned a date in the 6th-7th century and for the same reason, a post-Gupta but pre-Pāla date for this sculpture may be suggested. Corroboration for this dating has recently come from scientific analysis of a sample of the rice husk core from the image: Carbon 14 analysis gives a date of 633 A.D.  $\pm$  83 years, corrected using revised half life.<sup>39</sup> In other words, the probable date of the piece can be set at 550-716 A.D., a period mainly falling within the late 6th and 7th centuries. The image is important since it shows Sārnāth Gupta influence as far east as the Bhagalpur District (regardless of its precise date) and also because it is the largest metal image from northeastern India yet discovered. Possibly, it documents a practice of having very large images serve as central icons in shrines and chapels, sometimes taking the place of stone sculptures.

<sup>36</sup> See p. 128 above. Also see R. Mitra, "Buddhist Remains of Sultāngaṇj," pp. 360-72.

<sup>37</sup> Proponents of this view include Coomaraswamy (*History*, p. 85), who dates the image ca. 400 A.D.; Vincent A. Smith (*A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, 3rd ed. [Bombay, 1969], pl. 61b), who dates the image to the 6th century and feels that 8th-9th-century attributions are unacceptable; and Kramrisch ("Pala and Sena Sculpture," p. 108), who accepts an early 5th century date for the image. Asher (*Art of Eastern India*, p. 57) demonstrates convincingly the flaws in the arguments for an early date.

<sup>38</sup> Douglas Barrett, "Gandhara Bronzes," *Burlington Magazine* CII (Aug. 1960):361; Stanislaw Czuma, "A Gupta Style Bronze Buddha," *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* LVII, 2 (Feb. 1970):55.

<sup>39</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 117, n. 209.

##### Antichak

The recent excavations at the Buddhist monastic site at Antichak in Bhagalpur District have yielded few metal images and most of those that have been recovered have since disappeared. However, one small image of Maitreya (Fig. 194) was found at the site but is presently under worship in the home of a villager at Oriup, a village just next to the Antichak *stūpa* mound. The superficial resemblance of this figure to some of the smaller Maitreya images from Fatehpur in the Gaya District should not be ignored and the coincidence in iconography is also worth mentioning, since Maitreya occurs frequently at Fatehpur and yet is not widely seen at Nālandā and Kurkihār. The broad, slit-like facial features, the angular positions of the limbs of the body, the complicated lotus petals and the row of beads along the bottom of the image are all reminiscent of the Fatehpur forms and suggest a 12th century date. In addition, the two elements extending from the sides of the head-dress as well as the representations of the flowers held by the Bodhisattva are also similar to those seen at Fatehpur.<sup>40</sup> More images from Antichak will have to be found, however, before an explicit relationship between the two sites may be expounded.<sup>41</sup>

##### Pātharghātā

The extensive archaeological remains at Pātharghātā, some twelve kilometers northeast of Colgong in the Bhagalpur District, include rock-cut sculptures, caves, and other Buddhist and Hindu remains. The site was well noted by the 19th century explorers,<sup>42</sup> yet a comprehensive survey and analysis of the materials remains to be done. A number of metal images were discovered by P.C. Mukherji in the so-called Baṭeśvara<sup>43</sup> cave at the site, and these were then deposited in the Indian Museum, where they are presently kept.<sup>44</sup> One of these,<sup>45</sup> a representation of Samvara (Fig. 195), differs considerably in style from the tantric figures we have seen previously such as the Trailokavijaya from Nālandā (Fig. 170) which clearly reflected the Nālandā stylistic tendencies. The Samvara may reflect a local style which cannot be identified fully at present because of the paucity of comparative material available from the Bhagalpur District. The lotus petals, with their fluid curves and very three-dimensionally executed lines, have not been seen in metal sculptures from other sites. A similar softness and fluidity is seen in the depiction of the body and limbs of the figure. A tentative date of 11th century may be suggested for this piece.

Perhaps the most impressive metal sculpture found in the Baṭeśvara cave at Pātharghātā Hill is a lotus *maṇḍala* containing a central figure of Vajratārā, surrounded by various other personifications (Fig. 196). The image is shown in its open position here, but when the petals are pulled up and the cap (pictured) is placed at the top, it assumes the

<sup>40</sup> Huntington, "Some Bronzes," figs. 4, 7 and 8. Also, Figs. 189-190 above.

<sup>41</sup> Interestingly, still another depiction of Maitreya not unlike the previously mentioned pieces has been found at Pātharghātā in the Bhagalpur District, hardly two kilometers from Antichak. See Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 271 and pp. 327-28.

<sup>42</sup> See Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 367, for some of them.

<sup>43</sup> The name Baṭeśvara may be of considerable antiquity. See *ibid.*, pp. 369-70; D. C. Sircar, "Some Inscriptions from Bihar," pp. 4-7.

<sup>44</sup> Patil, *Antiquarian Remains*, p. 368; *EISMS*, p. 135.

<sup>45</sup> I have seen no record of the specific findspot of the image, which is from Pātharghātā, but I assume that it is one of the ones collected by Mukherji.

form of a lotus bud.<sup>46</sup> While this *maṇḍala* is not unique (there are several from Burma and one or two other Bihar-Bengal examples known), it represents an unusual and complex iconographic statement as well as a technical achievement in metal casting. The elaborate forms of the lotus petals, the accented postures of the deities, their jewelry and facial forms as well as other elements are indicative of a probable 12th century date. A work such as this is a supreme example of the final stage of Pāla period metal casting development, demonstrating that the early and somewhat tentative use of the metal medium had been completely overshadowed. While the artists of pre-Pāla period metal images showed an uncertainty about the strength of the medium and found the need to support individual elements of an image with strutlike devices (Fig. 26), the artisans at the final stage of the development exhibit a virtuosity in the exploitation of their medium. In some ways, then, it is entirely possible to view the development of metal image making in Bihar (and also Bengal) as a complete development, having both a definable beginning and a definable end. While the beginning arose somewhat naturally out of the artistic traditions of the past, the end was imposed by the cultural impact of the Muslims.

#### CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BIHAR SCHOOLS OF METAL SCULPTURE

Since our knowledge of Bihar metal sculpture is sporadic, it is difficult to determine the actual geography of metalwork style complexes. This problem is further compounded by the fact that small metal images were easily transportable so that the find spot of an image is not necessarily indicative of its place of manufacture. However, it can be seen readily that different schools existed—frequently almost side-by-side as in the cases of Fatehpur and Kurkihār, and hopefully, future discoveries will clarify questions of regionalism in metal casting.

<sup>46</sup> For an illustration, see *EISMS*, pl. LXXII, b.

## CHAPTER SIX

### STONE SCULPTURE OF BENGAL

In order to define the sculptural styles of Bengal, a quite different approach than had been used for Bihar must be employed. This is due in part to the different pattern of artistic production which occurred in this region. In Bengal, where Brahmanical faiths came to predominate, isolated temples (perhaps one for every major village) were built, often during a single period of activity and hence, workmen from different locales were probably called in to accomplish the task. This phenomenon is significantly different from what had been the case in Bihar where individual Buddhist establishments tended to maintain active workshops of artisans for periods as long as several hundreds of years, and these served as major artistic centers. Hence, in Bihar where we were able to trace specific artistic developments at numerous sites, in Bengal this is possible only in a few places, and primarily during the later period. Also in Bengal, especially, the dissemination of specific stylistic and iconographic types was much more wide-spread than had been the case in Bihar, indicating either active itineracy of workmen or extensive transport of finished sculptures, perhaps easily accomplished along the numerous waterways throughout Bengal. Thus, in 11th-12th century Bengal, it cannot be assumed that the place of origin and the find spot of sculpture are the same, making it difficult to define specific schools of sculpture, except in the most general regional terms.

The peak of artistic productivity in Magadha under the Pālas occurred during the 9th and 10th centuries and was primarily in the service of the Buddhist religion. Bengal's greatest period of artistic activity did not occur until the 11th and 12th centuries. Images from Bengal are mainly Brahmanical in subject, with Vaiṣṇava images outnumbering any other single subject by about three to one.<sup>1</sup> This shift not only in time and place but in subject matter from the 9th-10th century Magadhan Buddhist images to the 11th-12th century Brahmanical ones in Bengal poses a difficult problem. The eastward movement has been partially explained by the fact that Muslim raids from the west were slowly forcing religious settlements to take root farther east. The ties of Magadha to Buddhism have also been explained primarily by the historical associations of the region to Śākyamuni himself. However, the reasons for the ascendancy of Vaiṣṇavism, Śiva and Sūrya worship as well as other Brahmanical sects in Bengal is not so easily determined. Although it is generally asserted that the Pāla emperors were primarily patrons of the Buddhist religion, there is considerable evidence to show that the later Pālas were in fact followers of various Brahmanical sects. For example, not only does Rāmapāla's name suggest his Vaiṣṇava leanings, but in the *Rāmacaritam*, his court poet asserts that he was a veritable incarnation

<sup>1</sup> Enamul Haque has counted 1852 Brahmanical sculptures from Bengal. Of these, 854 are Vaiṣṇava, 277 Śaiva, 245 Saura, 229 represent Devī, 123 show other female goddesses and 124 depict minor gods. I believe that these numbers reveal accurate patterns of distribution; however, I am not certain that the total number of 1852 is entirely correct since I do not know the criteria by which Haque determined whether sculptures of unknown provenance were from Bihar or Bengal. See Haque, "Iconography," abstract, and Appendix A.

of Hari.<sup>2</sup> It would be impossible to say whether the Brahmanism of the later Pālas stimulated a significant change in the religion of the inhabitants of Bengal or whether their leanings were the result of a growing tide of Brahmanical faith among the people. In either case, the two phenomena seem to be closely interrelated.

It should also be remembered that Bengal itself was never as closely tied to Buddhism as was Magadha and the upsurge of Brahmanism in the 11th and 12th centuries may be viewed as popularization of one faith rather than the destruction of another. Traditionally, the introduction of Brahmanism into Bengal is traced to one King Ādiśūra who is credited with importing five Brahmans from Kanauj for the purpose of bringing Bengal into the fold of orthodoxy.<sup>3</sup> This event is variously put at the year Śaka 654, 675, 804, 854, 864, 914, 954, 994 and 999.<sup>4</sup> Since the Śaka Era is reckoned from 78 A.D., these dates would indicate that the event had occurred some time between 732 and 1077 A.D. While this is a rather broad period of time in which to place such a specific incident, it helps us to establish a relationship between King Ādiśūra's action and the artistic developments of the period under consideration. If it occurred in the 8th century, it is evidence of an active beginning for Brahmanism, and if it occurred in the 11th century, it might indicate that the popularity of the religion by that time made it desirable to become part of the orthodox tradition. Ādiśūra's role in the development of Brahmanism in Bengal is perhaps overstated (in fact, even his identity remains enigmatic), and we know from copper-plates as early as the Gupta period that Brahmans and Brahmanism were known in Bengal.<sup>5</sup> However, theoretically, all Brahmans from the northern Bengal regions of Rādhā and Varendra are descended from the five original men imported by Ādiśūra. This hereditary transfer of rank is often said to have been codified by Vallālasena, the second Sena king of Bengal, in the mid-12th century and to have been extended by his son and successor Lakṣmaṇasena in the late 12th century into the system known as Kulinism.<sup>6</sup> Thus, a very elaborate Brahmanical system of nobility and orthodoxy was in existence in Bengal at exactly the same time we may note the proliferation of Brahmanical images throughout the region. It will be seen that these images take the form of very strictly controlled icons in which only minor variations are allowed.

Numerous demonstrations outside of sculpture may be used to identify the solidity of the Brahmanical faith, especially Vaiṣṇavism, during the late Pāla and Sena periods in Bengal. During the 12th century, for example, Lakṣmaṇasena's court poet, Jayadeva, wrote the *Gītā Govinda*, which later became central to Kṛṣṇa worship in many parts of India. It is important to note that this is said to be the earliest known work in which all ten of the incarnations of Viṣṇu are given<sup>7</sup>—again an indication of the high level of codification which had been achieved in the religion by this time, or at least, an awareness of that level.

<sup>2</sup> Ram Charitra Prasad Singh, *Kingship in Northern India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1968), p. 34. Also, Haraprasad Sastri, *Rāmacaritam*, p. 12, v. 19.

<sup>3</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:625; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 471.

<sup>4</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:626; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, p. 472.

<sup>5</sup> See for example the Gupta copper-plates included in Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, pp. 41-61.

<sup>6</sup> R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:629-30; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 475-76. Also Sachchidananda Bhattacharya, *A Dictionary of Indian History* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1967), p. 530. The codification by Vallālasena is not accepted by Chowdhury (*Dynastic History*, pp. 235-36).

<sup>7</sup> A. K. Majumdar, *Caitanya, His Life and Doctrine: A Study in Vaishnavism*, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1969), p. 77.

Numerous other historical documents may be used to demonstrate the strength of Brahmanism in Bengal during the 11th and 12th centuries. It should be stressed that many of the concepts were not new at that time but were developments from earlier trends in art as well as religion. In addition, Buddhism remained in certain pockets of Bengal, seemingly undisturbed in its development although distinctly in a minor role. The following discussion of the sculptural development of Bengal deals first with the earliest remains and sculptures up to around 1025 A.D., that is, through the reign of Mahāpāla I. These images show almost total dependence on stylistic and iconographic forms which had developed in Magadha, but have no particular regionality within Bengal that may yet be determined. The later phase of Bengal sculpture, around 1025-1200 A.D., reveals the codification of forms and ideas and the proliferation of images according to what appear to be general regional patterns. These later sculptures are primarily Brahmanical in subject and, while based on forms which had developed in Bihar, are distinctively the products of the Bengal carvers.

#### EARLIEST REMAINS: PRE-PĀLA AND EARLY PĀLA PERIOD TO CA. 1025 A.D.

Numerically, sculptures from Bengal dating from prior to around 1025 A.D. are in a distinct minority compared to the later examples. A few traces of Kuṣāṇa influence have been found in Bengal, as seen in the image of Kārttikeya from Mahāsthāngarḥ cited in Chapter 2 (Fig. 1). The standing Buddha from Bihārail (Fig. 9) testifies to the transmission of Gupta forms to this region, and yet, like many of the other early sculptures, seems to have been imported from another place. The first indications of really large scale religious building activity does not occur until the period of the early Pālas, but even these must be considered minor compared to the wholesale scale of production which apparently occurred between around 1025 and 1200 A.D. in Bengal.

#### MAHĀSTHĀNGARḤ (Bogra District)

The ruins of the ancient city site of Mahāsthāngarḥ (or simply, Mahāsthān) were noted as early as 1808 by Buchanan-Hamilton<sup>8</sup> but were not identified with the ancient city of Puṇḍranagar until about 1879 when Cunningham associated his finds at Bhāsu-Bihār and Mahāsthāngarḥ with the descriptions of Hsüan Tsang<sup>9</sup> who had visited "Pan-na-fa-tan-na" (Puṇḍravardhana) between the years 639 and 645 A.D. during his stay in India. Cunningham's conclusions were later verified by the discovery in 1931 of an inscription written in the Aśokan Brāhmī script. This inscription testifies to the foundation of Mahāsthāngarḥ as early as the third century B.C. on the basis of the paleography of the script. More important here, however, is the content of the inscription which records the existence of a famine in this region and the measures taken by the Mahātmātra of Puṇḍranagar to meet it.<sup>10</sup> The reference to the city of Puṇḍranagar and the discovery of

<sup>8</sup> Nazimuddin Ahmed, *Mahasthan: A Preliminary Report on the Recent Archaeological Excavations at Mahasthan* (Karachi: Department of Archaeology and Museums, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, 1964), p. 5. Also, Martin, *Eastern India*, II (1837):609.

<sup>9</sup> Cunningham, ASR, XV, pp. 102, 104-17.

<sup>10</sup> G. C. Chandra, "Explorations at Other Sites in the Eastern Circle," *ASIAR*, 1930-34, pl. I and pp. 128-29; Kashinath Narayan Dikshit, "The Inscription of Mahasthan," *ASIAR*, 1930-34, pp. 218-19. Also, Devadatta Ramkrishna Bhandarkar, "Mauryan Brahmi Inscription of Mahasthan," *ET* XXI (1931-32), pl. II.

the inscription at Mahāsthāngarḥ have led scholars to assume that the two names refer to the same place. This idea is further corroborated by the indiscriminate use of the two terms in a 12th-13th century Sanskrit text, the *Karatoyā-Māhātmyam*.<sup>11</sup>

The ruins at the site consist of a large fortified city encompassed by a moat and having extensive suburbs surrounding it for approximately eight or nine kilometers. Apparently, the site was continuously inhabited from the time of its foundation (3rd century B.C.?) until the 15th-16th centuries and was successively under the control of the Mauryas, Guptas, Pālas and various minor Hindu dynasties as well as the Muslims as is evidenced by archaeological and epigraphic material.

Although excavations at Mahāsthāngarḥ and the nearby villages of Bihār and Bhāsu-Bihār had revealed several monuments of the Gupta and Pāla periods, until recently, the number of stone and metal sculptures recovered from these periods had been surprisingly small. However, excavations carried out at Bhāsu-Bihār in 1974-1975<sup>12</sup> not only increased our knowledge of the architecture there but led to the discovery of numerous terracotta sculptures and some eighty-six metal works, including forty Buddhist images.<sup>13</sup> No new significant stone finds were reported. However, previous discoveries, including the Kārttikeya referred to above (Fig. 1), indicate the possible use of stone images during the Kuṣāṇa period, if not local production of such images. In addition, an image of a standing Buddha was found at Bhāsu-Bihār (Fig. 197), giving further evidence of pre-Pāla period stone carving activity. Although clearly derived from the Buddhist Gupta styles of Mathurā and Sārnāth, though perhaps filtered through intermediary sources, the work is not of the Gupta period. In spite of the clinging drapery, the sweet facial expression and simplicity of the work, the figure is rather squat in proportion and the drapery has a rather heavy appearance, especially along the hem, compared to Gupta period works. Further, the *vidyādhara*s and small devotee are rather schematized in their rendering, suggesting a departure from Gupta models. Instead, the work might be compared to post-Gupta pieces from Bihar, like the Buddha from Telhāra, Patna District (Fig. 14), which could be dated to the late 6th or 7th century on the basis of style. The facial types, body proportions and general simplicity of the works are strikingly similar, suggesting a similar date of manufacture. The Mahāsthāngarḥ piece also bears similarities to the standing Buddha from the Mahābodhi temple (Fig. 17) of a slightly later date, perhaps the late 7th or early 8th century, in the treatment of the body, and thus, a 7th century date, intermediary between the comparative examples, may be suggested for the work.

Further evidence of stone carving at Mahāsthāngarḥ survives in a pair of stone pillars which were found in association with a temple presumed to be of the Pāla period, but which were undoubtedly reclaimed from an earlier monument. Asher has convincingly argued a 7th century date for these works and sees the prototypes for their decoration in Gupta examples.<sup>14</sup> Since the type of architectural decoration seen on these pillars is outside the scope of this study, which is concentrated on the development of icons and individual sculptures, the pillars will not be discussed here. However, it should be noted that they constitute evidence for artistic activity in the stone medium at Mahāsthāngarḥ during

the 7th century and lend some support to Hsüan Tsang's assertion that the city flourished at that time.

It is difficult to know how to interpret the paucity of stone sculptures which has been unearthed during the rather extensive excavations which have been carried out at Mahāsthāngarḥ, especially in light of a remarkable image of a standing six-armed Avalokiteśvara which was recently discovered in the vicinity of the site (Fig. 198). Clearly, it is the work of a master artist, who must have been part of a highly skilled, well-developed craft tradition. Yet, whether he would have gained his experience by working in other media, such as stucco or wood, and had been a local artist of Mahāsthāngarḥ, or whether he was an adept craftsman highly practiced in the art of stone carving and perhaps brought in from another site, cannot be determined. The work is distinctive and does not fall within the stylistic parameters of sculptural schools found at other sites in Bengal, or Bihar, for that matter, and thus it is tempting to hypothesize that indeed it represents a local tradition of the Mahāsthāngarḥ area. In virtually every respect, the Avalokiteśvara image stands in contrast to the Buddha image just discussed (Fig. 197) and it is difficult to judge how to associate the two works within a single and perhaps somewhat limited artistic tradition. Undoubtedly, development over time would account for some of the differences, as the Avalokiteśvara image is perhaps two centuries later in date, having probably been made in the 9th century.

This date may be ascertained by comparing certain elements in the sculpture with those occurring on several dated pieces, although none presents the entire configuration encountered here. One distinctive feature of the Avalokiteśvara is the very detailed carving of the flames around the perimeter of the halo, with their deep spiralled centers, and pointed tips. A similar treatment is seen in dated works from the 9th century, including the Pañcika from the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 28), the Buddha Taming Nālāgiri from the reign of Mahendrapāla (Fig. 38) and the Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā* from the reign of Mahendrapāla (Fig. 39). In later works, the flames are flattened and more irregular, often being created through the use of incised line rather than three-dimensionally sculpted.<sup>15</sup> The motif and its treatment in the more three-dimensional form seems to continue through the reign of Gopāla II as it occurs in the dated image of Vāgīśvarī from that period, ca. mid-10th century (Fig. 49).

Other aspects of the work further suggest a 9th century date. The stance of the figure maintains the gentle shift in weight associated with the early Pāla tradition, as seen, for example, in the Bodhisattva image from Nālāndā of the 7th century (Fig. 123). Indeed, the overall effect of the two sculptures is quite similar, as both reveal ultimate ties to the Gupta tradition and both are works of extremely high quality. That the Mahāsthāngarḥ image is of later manufacture, however, may be seen in its more elaborate treatment of the individual petals of the lotus pedestal, which have inner incised rims,<sup>16</sup> the greater ornamentation of the Bodhisattva, whose arm-bands, necklace and belt are more prominent, and his more elaborate head-dress. In addition, the overall image is more ornate since the halo in the Mahāsthāngarḥ piece is decorated while that of the Nālāndā piece is plain.

<sup>11</sup> *PA* 5, (1968):101.

<sup>12</sup> Nazimuddin Ahmed, "Recent Discoveries at Bhāsu-Bihār," *BLK* I, 1 (Jan. 1975):11-18.

<sup>13</sup> See p. 194 below.

<sup>14</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 62 and pls. 108-9.

<sup>15</sup> Contrast to Figs. 52 and 53.

<sup>16</sup> This feature is comparable to examples such as in Figs. 38, 40, etc.



Thus, these few remains in stone from Mahāsthāngarh offer tantalizing evidence of the possibility of an important school of sculpture at the site, at least in the 7th (Fig. 197) and the 9th (Fig. 198) centuries. What occurred between the production of these works, or in addition to them, can at present only be surmised.

#### PĀHĀRPUR (Rajshahi District)

The ruins at Pāhārpur, identified as the Buddhist monastery of Somapura, cover an area of approximately 11 hectares and have been referred to as the largest known Buddhist monastery south of the Himalayas.<sup>17</sup> The site was visited in the 19th century by Buchanan-Hamilton in 1807-11,<sup>18</sup> by Westmacott in 1875<sup>19</sup> and then by Cunningham in 1879.<sup>20</sup> Excavations were not carried out until 1923 when D. R. Bhandarkar excavated a few rooms on the southwest corner of the monastery enclosure.<sup>21</sup> In 1925-6, excavations revealing the plan and decoration of the main building were directed by R. D. Banerji<sup>22</sup> and the major portions of the rest of the work was done by K. N. Dikshit except for the years 1930-32 when G. C. Chandra continued the excavations.<sup>23</sup> By 1933-4, the entire mound had been exposed.

The main temple at Pāhārpur is cruciform in plan and closely resembles the *stūpa*/temple described at Antichak in the Bhagalpur District of Bihar.<sup>24</sup> Further, the Pāhārpur building is adorned with numerous terracotta plaques which are related in style and concept to those found at Antichak. This archaeological evidence for a coincidental existence of the two monasteries would further be substantiated by history if the Antichak establishment indeed turns out to be the Vikramaśīla monastery. According to Tibetan sources, Tāranātha and Sumpa, Vikramaśīla was founded by either Dharmapāla or Devapāla<sup>25</sup> and Somapura (Pāhārpur) was founded by Devapāla.<sup>26</sup> In the case of Pāhārpur, however, terracotta seals found at the site attribute the founding of the monastery to Dharmapāla and provide a similar time span as given for Vikramaśīla. The seals thus indicate the founding of Pāhārpur around the late 8th or early 9th century. These sealings bear the following inscription: 1) *Śrī-Somapura* 2) *Śrī-Dharmapāladeva* 3) *Mahāvihārīyābhikṣusaṅghasya*<sup>27</sup> (Of the community of the venerable monks belonging to the great *vihāra* at the illustrious Somapura [founded by] the illustrious Dharmapāladeva.) The discrepancy between the evidence on the seals that the monastery was founded by Dharmapāladeva and the evidence given by the Tibetans that it was founded by his son Devapāla is not serious for artistic dating purposes since very little difference in date for

<sup>17</sup> M. A. A. Qadir, *A Guide to Paharpur* (Karachi: Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Education and Information, Government of Pakistan, 1963), p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Cunningham, ASR, XV, p. 117.

<sup>21</sup> Kashinath Narayan Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur, Bengal*, MASI, LV (Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1938), p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> See pp. 125-6 above.

<sup>25</sup> See pp. 125-6 above.

<sup>26</sup> S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks*, p. 374.

<sup>27</sup> Charu Chandra Das Gupta, *Paharpur and Its Monuments* (Calcutta: K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1961), p. 3. Also Kashinath Narayan Dikshit, "Excavations at Paharpur," *ASIAR*, 1927-28, p. 105.

the monument would occur. However, a modern village adjoining the site named Dharmapurī is perhaps a memory of Dharmapāla's association with the monastery, supporting attribution of the foundation by that king.<sup>28</sup> The late 8th (or perhaps 9th) century date is further substantiated by the fact that Somapura is not mentioned by Hsüan Tsang in the 7th century and, were it in existence, it is probable that he would have made note of it. Conversely, considerable evidence from the 10th century exists to suggest that Somapura was by that time a flourishing establishment. This evidence includes an inscription dated on paleographic grounds to the 10th century that occurs on an image of the Buddha found at Bodh Gayā which tells that the sculpture was the gift of a monk named Vīryen-drabhadra from Somapura.<sup>29</sup>

The date of the main temple and its terracotta decorations, however, is not of concern to this study except as they have bearing on the stone reliefs which were arranged on the basement level of the temple at intervals along the perimeter. These sixty-three reliefs are all apparently non-Buddhist in subject matter except for one representation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.<sup>30</sup>

Several different theories have been proposed regarding the date of the reliefs. K. N. Dikshit originally thought the sculptures belonged to the same date as the temple, but believed this was around the 6th century A.D.<sup>31</sup> Later, he maintained the early date for the sculptures but suggested that the temple was of the time of Dharmapāla.<sup>32</sup> S. K. Saraswati recognized three distinct style groups in the reliefs and asserted that these separate styles represented different periods of artistic production.<sup>33</sup> Stella Kramrisch, after revising her original opinion which had concurred with that of Saraswati, agreed that indeed there are three distinct groups of sculptures differentiated by their styles, but suggested that all were done at the same time and simply are evidence for a theory that different art traditions were all active contemporaneously at Pāhārpur.<sup>34</sup> J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw<sup>35</sup> saw two styles among the sixty-two Hindu reliefs, a crude style and a "better," refined style, and these in turn were distinct from the single Buddhist relief. She suggested that the more refined type belonged to the second half of the 7th or first half of the 8th century and thereby predate the structure. (The same possibility is true of the crude type.) Most recently, Asher has opted for an 8th century date for the reliefs,<sup>36</sup> and thus a date approximately contemporary with the structure itself.

<sup>28</sup> J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "The Ancient Buddhist Monastery at Paharpur," *Antiquity and Survival* II, 1 (1957):29.

<sup>29</sup> C. C. Gupta, *Paharpur*, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> In fact, so little evidence of Buddhism has been found at the site that one wonders how it is possible. The actual sculptures which have been recovered from the site are few in number and are of Buddhist, Brahmanical, and Jain iconography. See K. N. Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur, Bengal*, p. 49, for the Avalokiteśvara description. For a discussion of Hindu deities in Buddhist contexts, see p. 24 above.

<sup>31</sup> Kashinath Narayan Dikshit, "Paharpur," *ASIAR*, 1926-27, p. 141.

<sup>32</sup> K. N. Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur, Bengal*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>33</sup> Sarasi Kumar Saraswati, *Early Sculpture of Bengal*, 2nd ed. (Calcutta, Sambodhi Publications, 1962), p. 47. Please note that my group nos. 1, 2, and 3 do not correspond to Saraswati's by number, although they do by style. My groups 2 and 3 are the reverse of his. Also, since he does not illustrate all of the sculptures from the basement, I do not know in all cases which reliefs are included in which group, although I assumed that the examples I chose would correspond to his definitions. Saraswati recently reiterated his views in his *Architecture of Bengal, Book I (Ancient Period)* (Calcutta: G. Bharadwaj, 1976), pp. 113-21.

<sup>34</sup> This information is given by Saraswati, *Early Sculpture of Bengal*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>35</sup> Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "Ancient Buddhist Monastery," p. 34.

<sup>36</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 93.

Unfortunately, most of the stone reliefs have been reburied since their original excavation in order to protect them and I have not had the opportunity to examine them firsthand. To some extent, then, modern scholars must be limited in making two crucial decisions bearing on the dates of the sculptures. The first question simply is whether there are indeed separate style groups. The second question is concerned with whether or not the reliefs fit properly and precisely into their architectural context. Vital to Saraswati's and van Lohuizen's theories is the assertion that the reliefs do not seem to fit into the structure well,<sup>37</sup> resulting in the suggestion that some had been reclaimed from an earlier monument. In his recent book,<sup>38</sup> Saraswati discusses the unequal and somewhat illogical distribution of the reliefs around the rather regular, symmetrical structure as further argument that they were not originally created for this structure. He does note, however, that the early reports on the sculptures prior to their reburial after excavation may be misleading in that empty spaces which might have held sculptures were not noted and thus the scheme may appear to be more irregular than originally intended. In contrast, K. N. Dikshit felt that the reliefs were perfectly adapted to the architectural structure and claimed that there are no signs whatsoever of more than one period of building activity on the basement level<sup>39</sup> which houses the reliefs although he conceded that the reliefs themselves could have been executed earlier than the building of the temple.<sup>40</sup> Thus, even though the building of the basement level of the temple might have occurred around the late 8th to early 9th centuries<sup>41</sup> (i.e. the reign of Dharmapāla), it is entirely possible that the reliefs are from an earlier date, as suggested by some authors, although they disagree in their reasons.

The three style groups accepted by most authors on this subject, either from their own observation or from concordance with Kramrisch or Saraswati, are as follows: 1) a graceful, refined style which shows close affinities to the Gupta tradition, as exemplified by a depiction of Yamunā (Fig. 199) 2) a stocky figured style, somewhat clumsy in execution although the figures are lively and animated in their postures as seen in a representation of *mithunas* (Fig. 200) and 3) an intermediary style which has been described as a compromise between the previous two, visible in a carving of Vāyu?<sup>42</sup> (Fig. 201). Until these images can be examined firsthand, these groups will be accepted since the published photographs seem to verify them, although it should be noted that the third group, the intermediary style, is somewhat difficult to isolate.

There is little question in any of the authors' minds that the sculptures of the second group represent the Bengal version of the Later Gupta/pre-Pāla styles. Saraswati placed this group later than the other two and dated these images to the 8th century.<sup>43</sup> He suggested that the Gupta-style sculptures are from the 6th century and the intermediary ones

are from the 7th century (or, possibly, both are from the 7th century)<sup>44</sup> and thus, he proposed a linear progression from the Gupta style to the more provincial manifestation of the 8th century. In contrast, Kramrisch theorized that the three different styles do not indicate a developmental sequence but may only indicate the meeting of artisans trained in different traditions.<sup>45</sup> In my opinion, there is substantial evidence to support her view in preference to that of Saraswati. Thus, while Saraswati's 8th century dating of the stocky-figured style could be supported by comparing these sculptures to the dated lintel from Bodh Gayā of the reign of Dharmapāla in the late 8th or early 9th century (Fig. 27), they better compare to images from a slightly earlier date, approximately late 7th or early 8th century, but of a related tradition. Specifically, the Pāhārpur sculptures relate to images such as the Sūrya from Surjan Giri (Fig. 96) in the stocky form of the figures and also in the prevalent use of the bead motif along the edges of the reliefs. Further, on the basis of comparison to a dated object from the late 7th-early 8th century, the more elegant images may also be dated to the same period. Compared with the image of Sarvvāṇī from the period of Queen Prabhavātī of the Khadga dynasty (Fig. 26) in the late 7th-early 8th century, for example, the image of Yamunā (Fig. 199) from the first group of Pāhārpur reliefs shows a similar treatment of the female form, the garments and hair style, as well as the jewelry. Thus, it is possible to show that both "extremes" of Saraswati's style continuum in fact could be contemporaneous, co-existing trends rather than from different periods.

The remaining group of sculptures showing the compromise style between these two extremes (Fig. 201) poses what is perhaps the greatest problem since they do not conform precisely to any stylistic mode defined thus far and cannot be studied by comparison to a dated image. However, until further evidence is forthcoming, there is no reason to suppose that this style might not represent a third artistic tradition at work at Pāhārpur. Since only isolated remains of sculptural traditions in Bengal prior to this time have been found, perhaps workers were brought from all parts of the empire to complete this large task and, hence, another style tradition could easily have made its appearance at the site. It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that the sculptures along the basement of the Pāhārpur temple are of a roughly equivalent date and are datable to the last part of the 7th or the first part of the 8th century.

These reliefs could then have been in existence by the time the founder of the Buddhist establishment at Pāhārpur in the person of Dharmapāla (or Devapāla) began his project, for there is evidence to document the presence of an earlier *vihāra* in this vicinity of perhaps the 5th century A.D. A copper-plate grant dated in the year 159 found there possibly refers to the Gupta era and thus, 478 A.D.<sup>46</sup> and records the request of a Brahman and his wife to purchase a certain amount of land. Supposedly, the profit could be used to provide a rest house for a teacher in the *vihāra* at Vaṭagohālī which has been identified with Goalbhita, a village adjacent to Pāhārpur.<sup>47</sup> While no trace of this establishment has been found, the inscription suggests that there were active religious communities in this region prior to the Pāla period. Even though meagre, the evidence strengthens the suggestion that already-existing reliefs could have been used in the Pāla establishment.

<sup>37</sup> Saraswati, *Early Sculpture of Bengal*, p. 42; Lohuizen-de Leeuw, "Ancient Buddhist Monastery," p. 34.

<sup>38</sup> Saraswati, *Architecture of Bengal*, pp. 117-20.

<sup>39</sup> K. N. Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur, Bengal*, p. 16.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>41</sup> Early authors believed that Dharmapāla's reign occurred earlier than the late 8th-early 9th-century date presently accepted. Thus, they date Pāhārpur slightly earlier than the late 8th-early 9th century.

<sup>42</sup> Traditionally, this sculpture has been identified as Yama in spite of a lack of attributes which might be associated with that god. Instead, the wind-blown scarf held by the deity suggests that he is Vāyu, the wind-god, who is described as two-armed, with his two hands holding the ends of a scarf worn by him, and his garment being inflated by wind. See Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2nd ed. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1956), p. 527.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 47. Note that Saraswati calls this group 3.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> As cited in Saraswati, *Early Sculpture of Bengal*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>46</sup> C. C. Das Gupta, *Paharpur*, p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

The stone reliefs of the basement of the main temple at Pāhārpur are important because they are evidence of rather large-scale stone-working projects at an early date. In addition, they show clear relation to forms which had been identified in Bihar from approximately the same period. The site remained active until well into the 12th century, although the relatively few metal and stone sculptures from later periods which have been recovered are not sufficient to allow the identification of a "Pāhārpur School" as had been possible at Nālandā, Kurkihār, Bodh Gayā and other sites. One example from this later period, though outside the purview of the present discussion, which is aimed at tracing the early Bengal developments, is a rare representation of Hevajra (Fig. 202). This small image demonstrates the existence of advanced tantric theory at Pāhārpur. Though difficult to assess in terms of its style since the subject is so rare in Bengal art, it may date from the 12th century, or certainly the late Pāla-Sena period.

#### LALMAI-MAINĀMATĪ (Comilla District)

Potentially a very rich archaeological area, the Lalmai-Maināmatī Hills region has only begun to be fully explored. More than fifty sites, testifying to the presence of an extensive Buddhist culture in southeastern Bengal from the 7th-12th centuries, have been identified. Only a few, however, have been excavated and, thus, our knowledge about the region remains limited. The sites are scattered on the Lalmai-Maināmatī ridge, which is essentially a range of low hills running in a north-south direction for about seventeen kilometers, the breadth being generally about one and a half kilometers. The name Lalmai refers to the southern part of this ridge while the northern part is known as Maināmatī. Important archaeological finds include monastic structures, some stone and metal sculptures, pottery, terracotta plaques, coins and copper-plate inscriptions. Recent publications<sup>48</sup> reveal a great deal about these remains; however, much work is left to be done before the full import of this region is understood.<sup>49</sup>

From an art historical perspective, the most important of the excavated sites is Śālban Vihāra which is dominated by a large cruciform *stūpa*/temple surrounded by a rectangular arrangement of monks' cells.<sup>50</sup> The kinship of this plan to that of Pāhārpur as well as the similarity of the terracotta decoration of the monuments is obvious, suggesting that the two sites must have undergone construction at the same approximate time. Indeed, two copper-plate inscriptions belonging to the Khadga dynasty found at Śālban Vihāra indicate a foundation of the monastery at least by the 7th century.<sup>51</sup> Possibly, it may have been founded even earlier, in the 6th century, if the reading of a name on a copper-plate inscription as Vainyagupta found at the site is correct.<sup>52</sup> Several copper-plates belonging

<sup>48</sup> Morrison, *Lalmai*; M. Harunur Rashid, "The Early History of South-East Bengal in the Light of Recent Archaeological Material," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1968); idem, "Pāla Rule," pp. 27-47.

<sup>49</sup> From an inscriptional analysis, Morrison (*Lalmai*, p. 112) contends that Samatāṭa, the ancient region where Lalmai-Maināmatī are located, was an independent territory throughout much of its history, and that the area around the Lalmai-Maināmatī Hills formed a focal point within Samatāṭa.

<sup>50</sup> For a plan, see F. A. Khan, *Mainamati: A Preliminary Report on the Recent Archaeological Excavations in East Pakistan* (Karachi: Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Education and Information, Government of Pakistan, 1963), p. 8.

<sup>51</sup> For the copper-plates, see Morrison, *Lalmai*, p. 101.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

to the little known Deva dynasty, successors to the Khadgas, indicate that the main period of construction at Śālban Vihāra took place slightly later, in the 8th century.<sup>53</sup> More than one hundred metal images have been found at Śālban Vihāra and thus it is evident that a vital tradition of image making, at least in metal, existed at the site.<sup>54</sup> However, at all the Lalmai-Maināmatī sites, there is a decided paucity of stone sculptures. Two stone plaques were discovered buried in the shaft of the central *stūpa* of the Koṭilā Murā group of buildings in the hills, and probably date from the 7th century.<sup>55</sup> Although they are very interesting plaques, they will not be discussed here since they are not icons of the type being considered in this volume since, in composition and form, they seem more related to the terracotta traditions. Thus, for the moment, discussion of the sculpture tradition in the Lalmai-Maināmatī region will be confined to the metal pieces to be discussed in the next chapter.

#### OTHER 8TH AND 9TH CENTURY IMAGES FROM BENGAL

In addition to the images already described which have definite ties to specific important sites, a fair number of isolated finds testify to the tentative beginnings of the Bengal stone sculptural tradition. Once again, these sculptures are remarkable in their resemblance to Magadhan types and suggest that, in many ways, Bengal art was an extension of the Bihar schools of the time. An image of Hari Hara, for example (Fig. 203), was found in the Burdwan District of western Bengal and, though damaged, reveals either Bihar workmanship or else very close ties between Magadhan and Bengal artistic traditions of approximately the late 7th century. The crown, jewelry, treatment of the garments, short and stocky body proportions, rounded halo with bead motif along the perimeter and hair style are clearly related to forms from Bihar, such as Figs. 94-96, and it may be suggested that the image is of a comparable date, ca. late 7th century.

More commonly seen in Bengal is the late 8th or early-to-mid-9th century image style which had been noted at Bodh Gayā (Figs. 100-101) and at various sites in the Monghyr District (Figs. 145-147). The majority of images conforming to those stylistic criteria from Bengal have been found in the western districts of Bengal, particularly in Dinajpur which is directly adjacent to eastern Bihar (Aṅga). Therefore, it may be assumed that these works reflect what must be described as a stylistic continuum in which the question of Bihar versus Bengal schools becomes academic. A typical example of this style found in West Dinajpur is a representation of Viṣṇu seated upon Garuḍa (Fig. 204). There can be little doubt that the stocky figures, simplified hexagonal shaped crown worn by Viṣṇu, the simple jewelry, garland motif along the perimeter, rounded back-slab and rather flattened treatment of the figures are clear indications of this early Pāla period date. Several other examples could be cited as belonging to this style which demonstrate that Bengal sculptures of this period were largely an extension of Bihar carvings regardless of whether they were produced in Bihar and exported or whether they were actually executed on Bengal soil.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 101-4 for the inscriptions.

<sup>54</sup> See p. 188 below.

<sup>55</sup> For illustrations, see Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, pls. 111-12.

## ASSOCIATION WITH BIHAR STYLES THROUGH REIGN OF MAHĪPĀLA I

Sufficient numbers of images have been found in Bengal to demonstrate that through the reign of Mahīpāla I, that is, up to around 1025 A.D., Bengal and Bihar remained in close contact, either transporting images or artisans from one place to another or having artists throughout the combined regions trained in nearly identical styles. On the basis of numbers alone, with Bihar having produced many more images in these styles, I would suggest that Bihar, with Magadha as its core, was the artistic leader of the time and only after Mahīpāla's reign did the Bengal schools of sculpture begin to develop totally apart from the trends in Magadha. At that time, distinctive regional styles began to arise in Bengal. One prominent art center developed near what is now the modern city of Dacca, at ancient Vikramapura, and, in many ways, the sculpture of this area embodies what may be considered many of the main trends of southern Bengal art. In addition, art styles characteristic of sites in northern Bengal (the region directly adjacent to Aṅga) also became evident. The late 10th and early 11th centuries, then, are marked by evidence of active contact with the art centers of Bihar followed shortly by a new independence from that tradition.

A number of images found in Bengal may be dated to the 10th century on the basis of their similarities to sculptures which have been seen from Bihar. In each case, comparison can be drawn to a Bihar example not only for the purpose of dating but also to demonstrate once again the difficulty of determining whether the piece found in Bengal was also executed there or whether it was actually the product of a Bihar atelier. Since these images are relatively fewer in Bengal, it is again my assertion that they were imported from Magadha and show a certain dependence of Bengal on Bihar for sculpture at that time. Three examples will demonstrate the styles of these works. An image of Pārvatī (Fig. 205) was found in the Bogra District of Bengal, and yet stylistically, it conforms almost precisely to the norms defined as a major trend in Gaya District sculpture of the 10th century as may be seen by comparing it to Fig. 115 in particular. In style, a representation possibly of Mahāpratisarā from Bhavanipur, Dacca District (Fig. 206) is remarkably similar to the dated sculpture of Vāgīśvarī from Nālandā from the reign of Gopāla (II), ca. mid-10th century (Fig. 49). The standard stylistic criteria for sculptures of the reign of Mahīpāla I have already been observed in two dated images which were found in Bengal, the Bāghāurā Viṣṇu (Fig. 52) and the Nārāyaṇpur Gaṇeśa (Fig. 53) from the late 10th or early 11th century. Other images from Bengal bearing similar traits include a Varāha from Silimpur, Bogra District (Fig. 207). In each of these comparisons, the similarities of figure style, jewelry, hair, ornaments, treatment of the back-slab, decoration of the perimeter of the stele and other features are obvious.

## THE LATER DEVELOPMENTS, CA. 1025 A.D.-12TH CENTURY

In contrast to the above images, there is a visible proliferation of distinctive icons during the 11th century which may only be explained by the emergence of numerous active centers of artistic production in Bengal at that time. These, in turn, probably reflect the rising popularity of Brahmanical faiths in Bengal, greater patronage and perhaps wealth. While sculptures in these new styles have been found all over Bengal, so little is known about the sites and the ancient religious establishments that it is not possible to do an exhaustive site by site study, as had been feasible in Magadha. Instead, the images fall into

broad classifications which may be defined according to general regional trends. These do not, as will be explained below, apparently follow the ancient geographic divisions of the Bengal region.<sup>56</sup> Instead, the most identifiable trends seem to be those centering on the city of Vikramapura in the Dacca District, a general "southern" Bengal category and a general "northern" Bengal group. These patterns will be treated in the discussion that follows.

## VIKRAMAPURA (Dacca District, South-central Bengal)

The region around the modern city of Dacca in the Dacca District of central Bengal (ancient Vaṅga) has consistently yielded large numbers of stone sculptures of the later Pāla and Sena periods. It is, in fact, one of the few locations in Bengal which can be pointed to on the basis of literary, archaeological, historical and inscriptional evidence as a main center of artistic activity, giving rise to its own traditions and workshops. Unfortunately, the lack of systematic excavation makes it very difficult to put together other than a most generalized estimate of what might have been the actual artistic developments in this region.

Perhaps the clearest account of the historical importance as well as the description of the numerous sites and villages around Dacca comes from Bhattasali in his iconographic study of the images in the Dacca Museum.<sup>57</sup> The region itself has been continuously inhabited for at least 1200 years and has at various times served as centers of power or victory camps for the Candras, Senas and Varmans and perhaps the Pālas. At its florescence, ancient Vikramapura (also called Rāmpāl) covered an area of approximately 38 square km. It was bordered on the north by the Ichhamati River, on the east by the Brahmaputra and on the south and west by two artificial canals.<sup>58</sup> Today, the entire area is divided into small villages and sites.<sup>59</sup> The images which have been recovered have been found in tanks, ditches and in the ruins of ancient *deuls* (temples) and, while their find-spots are frequently recorded, without systematic survey it is impossible to correlate the specific find-spot with a style or workshop at this time. The numerous tanks are sometimes quite large (the Great Rāmpāl tank is 652 m. × 253 m.) and, along with the many ruined temples, they suggest substantial patronage by the royal families as well as the populace for several hundred years.

Besides its political role as an administrative center, Vikramapura is notable for its religious importance. For the Buddhists, Vikramapura was the birthplace of the great teacher Atīśa (Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna), who later became abbot of the Vikramaśīla monastery and who went to Tibet in A.D. 1040.<sup>60</sup> The city was said to have contained an extensive Buddhist monastic establishment. Buddhist remains found in this area testify to this as well as to its possible florescence at a period comparable to that of Nālandā, Vikramaśīla and other important monastic establishments. Both the Buddhist and Brahmanical images found at Vikramapura show a divergence from Magadha tradition in style and in iconography.

<sup>56</sup> See below, pp. 171-72.

<sup>57</sup> Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pp. vi-xii. Morrison indicates that Vikramapura was the major administrative center of the Bengal Delta in the 10th-12th centuries. See Morrison, *Political Centers*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>58</sup> Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pp. viii-ix.

<sup>59</sup> For a map, see *ibid.*, pl. LXXX, p. x.

<sup>60</sup> Chattopadhyaya, *Atīśa and Tibet*, pp. 58, 60.

A number of carvings found in the vicinity of Dacca typify what I have identified as a "Burmo-Bengali" style of carving.<sup>61</sup> A representation of a Buddha holding a gem in his right hand, perhaps Ratnasambhava or Bhaiṣajyaguru, from Vikramapura (Fig. 208) and a Buddha with his hands in *dhyānamudrā*, perhaps Amitābha or Garbhadhātu Vairocana, found at Mahākali, Vikramapura (Fig. 209) may be used to define the style. The elongated stele format with the point at the top (broken in the case of Fig. 209 but apparently once present), the reduced size of the central figure in proportion to the rest of the stele and its elements, the increased height of the pedestal portion of the slab, the rather complex forms of the lotus petals and the general stiffening of the figures may be cited as evidence for a date no earlier than the mid-11th century for these figures as they are clearly advanced from the forms of the reign of Mahīpāla I from the beginning of the 11th century. In each case, the Buddha has broad shoulders, an expansive chest, tubular arms, round face, nubby curls for his hair and an elongated *uṣṇīṣa*. In Fig. 208, a jewel is placed atop the *uṣṇīṣa*. While the two figures are not identical (Fig. 209, for example, is more slender), they are set apart from Bihar examples already defined for the 11th century. The two Buddhas from Vikramapura have an almost "metallic" appearing surface, with the skin seeming as if it is stretched across the forms of the body, in contrast to the majority of Bihar stone images in which a soft, fleshy quality is generally present. These features instead are reminiscent of the Buddha seen in Fig. 191, the metal sculpture from Fatehpur in the Gaya District, which I suggested closely resembles a number of images from Burma.<sup>62</sup> Numerous examples of Burmese sculpture from the 11th and 12th centuries demonstrate these likenesses.<sup>63</sup> Historical basis for relating Burmese art to that of Bihar and Bengal has already been established.<sup>64</sup> The fact that Burma lies directly to the east of Bengal need hardly be mentioned. Thus, while the actual method of transmission of style and the places of origin and development are left to be understood, the existence of this common style can hardly be questioned.

Perhaps one of the more remarkable features of the two stelae is the treatment of the back-slabs, with the trilobate arches behind the main figure and the architectural constructs. These elements were also quite popular in Burma, especially the temple form, and serve as a further link with Burmese imagery. The trilobate arch was noted only in passing in the sculptural tradition of Magadha but was seen as early as the reign of Śūrapāla (I) (Figs. 34-35). However, in Magadha, this motif never became particularly popular. Here, and in numerous other representations from Bengal, the arch replaces the halo entirely and substitutes for the Magadhan throne back. The concept of a temple form, appearing in Figs. 208-209, is also not new to Pāla period sculptures and was seen, for example, in a metal representation of a crowned Buddha from Kurkihār (Fig. 183). However, once again, the frequency with which this type of construction occurs in Bengal (as well as Burma) is an indication that it became a regional preference. The actual forms of the temples appear rather accurate and may be analyzed as a key to architectural forms prevalent in Bengal at that time.<sup>65</sup> It is also possible to suggest that the temple forms and the central

<sup>61</sup> Huntington, "Some Aspects," pp. 25-27.

<sup>62</sup> See pp. 150-51 above.

<sup>63</sup> For example, see Luce, *Old Burma*, pl. 431, which Luce dates to around 1100 A.D., or the sculptures on pls. 195-202.

<sup>64</sup> See p. 151 above.

<sup>65</sup> For a discussion of architectural types, especially in Pāla-period painting, see Sarasi Kumar Saraswati, "Rare Architectural Types in Manuscript Illuminations," *BLK* I, 1 (Jan. 1975):1-10.

figures within them are specific and do not represent only a conceptual Mahābodhi temple as is sometimes suggested. A clue to this type of analysis is given in Bhattasali's discussion of two illustrated manuscripts of the Pāla period of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*.<sup>66</sup> Bhattasali follows Foucher who had described these miniatures<sup>67</sup> and has selected only those which refer to Vaṅga and Samatāṭa (the ancient names of central and eastern Bengal, respectively). These small paintings show representations of various Buddhist personages, standing or seated, within an architectural structure not unlike those seen here. An inscription beneath each illustration identifies the deity as well as the specific name of the shrine in which that deity is housed. Thus, the inscription "Chandradvīpe Bhagavatī Tārā" identifies one representation as the Bhagavatī Tārā at Chandradvīpa. Another, "Samatāṭe Jayatuṅga Lokanātha" tells of the Lokanātha from Jayatuṅga in Samatāṭa.<sup>68</sup> In many cases, these locations are clearly identifiable with known sites in various parts of Bengal, making it almost certain that these paintings are in fact representations of specific shrines and not simply abstract versions of generalized concepts. The existence of these miniatures gives credibility to the suggestion that these stone sculptures may also carry such specific meanings. The observation that there is a great deal of variation in the style and structure of these temple forms further supports the possibility that they are depictions of individual monuments and not a generalized type. Since the Buddhas within the shrines in these images do not appear to be representations of Śākyamuni, it is unlikely that the shrines would be the Mahābodhi temple at Bodh Gayā.

These two stelae are thus extremely important to an understanding of the developments of both style and iconography in Buddhist sculptures from Bengal during the later Pāla period. Their departure from Magadha styles is of great interest, but even more vital is their relationship to the Burmese types. Since a number of images of this style and form have been found in other places in Bengal besides Vikramapura (Fig. 232), the development of this style may not be tied to one place in Bengal, but should be thought of as a style-complex until further evidence is found.

Another aspect of Buddhist sculpture around Dacca may be illustrated by an image of Parṇasabarī (Fig. 210). Interestingly, this image is nearly identical in all respects of style and iconography except for minor variations to a second carving of Parṇasabarī, which was also found at Vikramapura, although the one illustrated here was found at Naynanda, Tangibari, while the other was found at Vajrayoginī, Munshigañj, about six kilometers away.<sup>69</sup> The two carvings are not the same size but their similarity to each other suggests that they were made in the same workshop. Both display a simplicity that belies their later Pāla period date but, along with several other Buddhist and Brahmanical images, they seem to be part of a distinct stylistic group of the 11th century that appears simultaneously in northern Bengal and in the Dacca vicinity. This stylistic development, characterized by its relative simplicity, is perhaps best explained and most convincingly dated by a few Brahmanical examples, as given below.

In most of the images of Viṣṇu and Sūrya, as well as several other Brahmanic deities, which have been dated to the reign of Mahīpāla I or earlier, certain types of head-dresses

<sup>66</sup> Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pls. Ia-d, IIa-b, and pp. 12-14.

<sup>67</sup> Alfred Foucher, *Etude sur l'iconographie bouddhique de l'Inde d'après des documents nouveaux*, 2 vols., Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des hautes études: Science religieuses, vol. 3, pts. I-II (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1900-1905).

<sup>68</sup> For others, see Saraswati, "Rare Architectural Types," p. 2.

<sup>69</sup> For an illustration, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 296.



were worn by the main figure. These crowns were characterized by a flattened conical shape in the 7th through the 9th centuries (Fig. 100) and by a hexagonal shape until the time of Mahīpāla I in the late 10th-early 11th century (Fig. 52). Although the later form is more elongated than the earlier one, it is still rather conservative compared to examples to be found from the latter part of the 11th and the 12th centuries. Also, while the surface of the crowns in these earlier examples is enhanced by incised decoration, there is no "encrustation" of the head-dresses with three-dimensionally carved gems and adornments as is typical in later examples. Numerous works dating from prior to the 11th century may be found to follow this basic pattern. However, the dated examples from subsequent periods such as the image of Viṣṇu from the reign of Govindacandra (Fig. 67) or that of Sūrya from the same period (Fig. 66) are completely different. Not only have the crowns become higher, but the head-band stands out from it more distinctly. In addition, the surface of the crowns is enlivened by the depiction of gems. From the 11th century on, these forms and their variations become standard.

Because of the developed form of the head-dress, as well as the general configuration of the icon, an image of Sūrya discovered near Rāmpāl, Vikramapura (Fig. 211), may be dated to the first half of the 11th century, or roughly contemporaneous with the Sūrya from the reign of Govindacandra (Fig. 66). Similarities between the two sculptures include the knotted straps across the breast of the figures (a feature which becomes common on southern Bengal images of Sūrya after this time), the shape and structure of the lotuses held in the hands, the double-outline of the lotus petals on the pedestals, the disposition of the smaller Sūrya images along the sides of the stelae and even the shape of the point at the top of the slabs. However, the Rāmpāl piece is definitely plainer in overall form and effect, with much more space allowed on the back-slab and a general simplification of forms in every detail. Thus, while there is little reason to doubt an approximately contemporaneous date for the sculptures, it is evident that they are representative of different stylistic trends.

Still another demonstration of this tendency towards simplification is seen in a representation of Aghora which was found at Ābdullāpur, Vikramapura (Fig. 212). In this case, so many of the now-expected elements, such as floral motifs, clouds surrounding the *vidyādhara*s, gems on the crown and other portions of the jewelry, are lacking, that it strongly suggests the image was completed or intended to be completed by painting. The treatment of the pedestal, broken into five divisions with the suggestion of a continuous horizontal scene, is extremely close to that seen in the Laḍahacandradeva Śiva Naṭarāja (Fig. 64), suggesting that this is a work of the early 11th century.

The above discussion has dealt with a few of the more apparent style categories which emerge from the extensive extant remains from the Vikramapura area. Although it is certain that continuous, active production of stone carvings occurred at Vikramapura, probably in a number of separate workshops, at present it is difficult to establish what must be the distinctive, or even the exclusive, features of the Vikramapura materials. Many images of "Vikramapura" types are found elsewhere in Bengal, mainly in what I shall define below as southern Bengal, and many images found at Vikramapura suggest that they might have been brought there from another place of manufacture. Thus, while Vikramapura is without question one of the most important artistic centers in Bengal, particularly of the 11th-12th centuries, style definitions of the type which could be made at a number of sites in Bihar remain difficult. Instead, some works from Vikramapura, along

with others found in neighboring regions, might best be described as belonging to a general southern Bengal classification.

#### 11TH-12TH CENTURY STYLES OF SOUTHERN BENGAL

Before treating the art styles which seem to have been current in "southern" Bengal, a brief geographic note is necessary to explain this rather broad grouping of sites in Bengal. Commonly, Bengal is divided into four portions which naturally arise out of the pattern of major rivers which traverse the land. At times, these units were identical with individual political states or kingdoms. The usual explanation of these divisions is as follows:<sup>70</sup>

1. *Northern Bengal (Varendra [or Gauḍa])*: This region lies north of the main branch of the Ganges known as the Padma River and west of the Brahmaputra River (which is called the Jamuna in Bengal). It included the region of Puṇḍravardhana as one of its major centers. Today, Varendra roughly corresponds with the districts of Maldah, Pabna, Rajshahi, Bogra, Dinajpur, West Dinajpur and Rangpur. It is contiguous with Bihar on the west.
2. *Central Bengal (Vaṅga)*: This region is the alluvial plain roughly enclosed by the Bhagirathi and Hooghly Rivers on the west, the Ganges/Padma, lower portion of the Brahmaputra (Jamuna) and the mouth of the Meghna Rivers on the north and east. It essentially corresponds with the modern districts of Dacca, Faridpur, Jessore, Backerganj, Khulna and Nadia.
3. *Southeastern Bengal (Samatāṭa)*: This is the hilly area east of the Meghna River which includes Comilla (Tippera), Chittagong and Noakhali Districts.
4. *Western Bengal (Vardhamāna)*: Lying primarily to the west of the Bhagirathi and Hooghly Rivers, this region consisted of what are now the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura, Purulia, Midnapore, possibly Murshidabad and 24 Parganas. (The latter is to the east of the Hooghly River.) The region is contiguous with southern Bihar on its west side. It included ancient Rāḍhā.

A second scheme, one which may be more pertinent to the discussion of the stone sculpture schools, has been accepted by recent Bengali writers.<sup>71</sup> In this definition of the Bengal territories, the regions of Vaṅga, Samatāṭa and one called Harikela, which is believed to correspond with modern Sylhet, are grouped under the common designation of Vaṅga (that is, the *Bang* of the early Muslim historians). Although it is clear from inscriptional, artistic, historic and cultural evidence that Samatāṭa proper had a distinctive and separate development from Vaṅga or Harikela, this general definition of Vaṅga, which unifies much of the southern region except that of western Bengal, seems to support the types of observations which can be made about geographic patterns of the stone sculpture of Bengal, although, interestingly, not metal images. The stone sculptures found throughout this broad area are related to each other in general terms and, in turn, are

<sup>70</sup> See R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, I:12-28; idem, *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 6-14; Morrison, *Political Centers*, pp. 152-153 for accounts of ancient Bengal geography. These four simple divisions were defined by correlating several authors' opinions. It should be noted that ALL references to Bengal in this book refer to the unified region prior to partition in 1947.

<sup>71</sup> Chowdhury, *Dynastic History*, p. 4, n. 2; Haque, "Iconography," p. 37.

highly distinctive as compared to the prevalent artistic styles in northern Bengal (Varendra). Although from the materials I have collected, I have not been able to establish clear distinctions between the western Bengal (Vardhamāna) and broadly defined Vaṅga art traditions, partly because so many works presumably from these regions are of undocumented provenance, I would expect that such a pattern might some day emerge. In the discussion here, therefore, northern Bengal (Varendra) will be used to designate the districts north of the Ganges/Padma and Meghna Rivers, except for the region around Dacca, which belongs to what I am defining as southern Bengal, including Vaṅga, Samatāṭa, Harikela and Vardhamāna. It should be noted that the definitions of territories remain highly controversial among scholars of Bengal, a phenomenon partly due to the fact that the definitions themselves changed over time with the alterations in the course of the rivers as well as the changing political fortunes of rulers.

Although, as I have suggested, it may be possible some day to refine the geographic definitions of the art styles of Bengal, there is a great deal of validity in using the broad designations of "northern" and "southern" in defining artistic patterns. From the apparent dispersal trends visible in the art, with images of very similar stylistic types being found at distant sites, although generally within either the northern or the southern sphere, there was apparently either active itineracy of craftsmen, or exportation of images from single art producing centers to widely dispersed sites, or perhaps both. Thus, when several sites in Bengal each yield a few sculptures of a particular style, it is impossible to associate the style with any one of them. In Bihar, when significant numbers of comparable sculptures were found at a single site, such as Nālandā or Kurkihār, and only one or two of the style retrieved from other locations, it could be suggested with some degree of assurance that the works were the product of one atelier, although some pieces had been transported to other locations, or that the craftsmen themselves had travelled. Such factors, then, must be borne in mind in the discussion of the Bengal styles of sculpture below.

One example of such stylistic dispersal may be seen in examples of the so-called "simplified" style previously defined which apparently gained some currency around Vikramapura in the 11th century. A number of sculptures falling within the broad stylistic parameters have been found at different locations throughout southern Bengal. Each of these images is characterized by animation of the central figure, rather lively and softly modelled bodies and by a general refinement of carving. In some cases, the images appear to be highly complex but this may be due to iconography and should not be confused with a lack of simplicity in style of representation since mere proliferation of arms, heads and attributes does not imply stylistic complication. Rather, the noticeable absence of floriated motifs, gems and other surface embellishments characterizes the relative stylistic austerity. That the images are not "simple" in the same manner that has been used to describe the pre-Pāla and early Pāla style modes and cannot be confused with them is obvious since a number of "later" characteristics are generally present. For example, in the representations of Mārīcī from Panditsar, Faridpur (Fig. 213), Durgā Mahiṣāsūramardīnī from Backerganj District (Fig. 214) and Heruka from Subhampur in Comilla District (Fig. 215), the pointed, attenuated back-slabs, elaborate head-dresses and rather deep carving of the central figures denote a date not earlier than the late 10th or beginning of the 11th century. In addition, the iconographic complexity in each case is representative of a mature stage of religious development and further reinforces the suggested dating for the images to the early 11th century. These sculptures may also be contrasted with later 11th and 12th

century developments which are frequently characterized by an overriding stiffness and static quality to the forms, as will be discussed below. I would suggest that these three images, as well as the preceding ones which were from the vicinity of Dacca (both Buddhist and Hindu) show a primary concern with iconography and the clarity of its expression through the avoidance of subsidiary detail. In an era when new and complicated iconographic forms were coming into popularity, perhaps clarity of execution became a virtue. Since this trend towards simplification seems to occur at approximately the same time that we notice the true beginning of Bengal (as distinct from Bihar) formulations and productivity, it may be suggested that these sculptures are infused with the liveliness and directness which is frequently associated with the initial stages of an art tradition. The uniqueness of this trend in sculptural formulation is perhaps best appreciated, however, in contrast to the numerous other stylistic developments which characterize the next two hundred years of Bengal sculpture. The discussion below is a compendium of such stylistic digressions.

#### OTHER STYLISTIC TYPES

Many images which have been found throughout Bengal appear unique to us since others of their types have not yet been discovered. However, the general characteristics of some of these images allow us to describe possible aesthetic and technical norms that were followed by artists and accepted by patrons. These broad specifications help distinguish the products of southern Bengal from most of those from northern Bengal, as well as those from Bihar.

The vestige of the simple, but animated, style of the turn of the 11th century is seen in a very large sculpture of Viṣṇu which was found at Vikramapura and which is presently preserved in the Dacca Museum (Fig. 216). The smiling face of the god and his rather soft, fleshy body recall the freedom seen in Figs. 213 and 215 in particular although his strict frontality has been determined by his iconography. His lotus pedestal is no more complicated or elaborate than those upon which the Mārīcī and Heruka figures stand (Figs. 213, 215). Viṣṇu wears no more ornaments than are iconographically necessary and restraint has also been shown in the form of the crowns worn by the attendant consorts of Viṣṇu as may be seen in an absence of gems on the surface. Enough empty space is left on the back-slab behind the figures of the two consorts, on the throne back behind Viṣṇu and above at the top of the stele to create an uncluttered appearance in spite of the elaboration of the *harisās* atop the cross-bar of the throne back and the border of the halo. In all, the image has a delicacy and refinement which seems to derive from the simplified forms of the early 11th century. In fact, this representation may also be a product of the same approximate period since it closely compares to the Viṣṇu from Betkā, Dacca of the reign of Govindacandra (Fig. 67) dated to the first half of the 11th century, although the present piece is decidedly more simplified in every respect.

In contrast to the rather soft and refined treatment in the previous example, a major trend in Dacca and Faridpur District sculptures (as well as some of the other areas around) seems to have been towards a stiff and lifeless form. Sufficient images relating to the Sūrya from the reign of Govindacandra from Kulkuḍi, Faridpur District (Fig. 66) have been found to suggest that this stiffness, along with a broad, heavy body style, was frequently seen in 11th century images from southern Bengal. Selected from numerous possible ex-

amples, an image of Sūrya which is believed to have come from Vikramapura demonstrates this type (Fig. 217). The near duplication of the central figures as well as the two main attendants in the breadth of their bodies, their postures and facial features is remarkable and the garments and adornments worn by the figures are also worthy of comparison. Minor differences in finishing details, such as the bejewelled crown of the dated image from the reign of Govindacandra or his more elaborate hip ornaments compared to those features of the other image, do not detract from the overall similarities. The shapes of the two stelae, the forms of the lotuses held by the central deities as well as those upon which they stand, the treatment of the pedestal portion of the image with its division into seven portions and its depiction as Sūrya's horse-drawn chariot are also remarkably alike. In the dated example, miniature representations of Sūrya which repeat the main theme of the image are placed within a vine scroll beside the central figure. This feature is not common on images of Sūrya from Bihar but it seems to become a very popular means of embellishment on Bengal stelae. In concept, the small figures in a similar position in Fig. 217 remain the same, although in this case they may represent planetary deities. A mere coincidence of iconography is not enough to explain the close relationship seen in these two sculptures since so many stylistic variations may be found to occur on one iconographic theme. A decided stylistic preference for the wide body and stiff posture as well as the broad face with its typical smile seems to be in operation in these and several other figures. Fortunately, the inscription on the Faridpur example allows us to date the stylistic type to the first part of the 11th century with some assurance.

Perhaps slightly more free in its execution is another sculpture showing Sūrya (Fig. 218). This image was found at Daharpara in Faridpur District. Although it provides a different effect than the other two examples (Figs. 66 and 217) due to the reduced size of the back-slab relative to the central figure, an examination of Sūrya and his two main attendants shows conformity in many respects to them. In particular, the shape of the crowns, the breadth of the bodies, smiling expressions, necklaces and knotted strap across the chest and even the lotuses held by the central figures are worthy of mention, and suggest a date in the first half of the 11th century for this work. However, in contrast to the two images just discussed, there is a certain freedom and lack of precision in execution which characterizes a great proportion of the images which have been found throughout much of southern Bengal. Since at present it is not possible to identify main artistic centers let alone provincial ones, it cannot be determined whether these images constituted an aesthetic of major standing or whether they are the products of secondary artistic hubs. A demonstration of this characteristic may be seen more clearly in several other examples.

A representation of Viṣṇu was found at Arial, Dacca District, and, while demonstrating an elaborate composite of iconographic elements, must be considered rather fluid in its delineation (Fig. 219). Once again, the posture, form and decoration of the central figure and his consorts suggest an early 11th century date, probably contemporaneous with the several preceding images. Perhaps the back of the central figure is arched more severely, and the chest juts further forward, but if anything, this helps to alleviate some of the stiffness of the image. The leogryphs at the sides of the central figure, the vine and scroll motifs at the top and bottom of the slab, the *vidyādhara*s as well as such features as the attributes held by Viṣṇu betray a more sketchy and approximate rendering of forms than seen previously. Instead, the forms almost appear as if they were a clay model or sketch which had been rapidly moulded by the artist's hands rather than chiselled with some greater effort.

The same effect, almost as if modelled in clay or some other easily manipulated material, is seen in a sculpture of Kalyāṇasundaramūrti, the Marriage of Śiva, from Rāmpāl, Dacca District (Fig. 220) and another of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara which was found at Badarhati in the Hooghly District (Fig. 221). The differences in subject matter and composition do not negate the lively and freely conceived forms. In both examples, the figures and all iconographic elements have a fluid quality which seems to defy the nature of the hard stone itself. The sketchy depiction of figures such as those on the back slab of the Marriage of Śiva stele or the small attendants next to Avalokiteśvara suggests that finishing details might have been added in plaster and paint. While this may also be the case where more carefully rendered images are concerned, this lack of precision may be used as a regional and stylistic determinant since it occurs so frequently in southern Bengal images. The breadth of the figures and their faces relates them to the image of Sūrya from Daharpara (Fig. 218) and to the images dated to the reign of Govindacandra in the first part of the 11th century. Śiva, in fact, is quite closely related to those images in style. The Avalokiteśvara is more difficult to place since it is unusual in style (as well as in iconography). However, the foliage at the bottom, his high hair style, broad face and body and tubular legs suggest a date in the first part of the 11th century for him as well.

In the representation of Avalokiteśvara, the freedom of execution gives a vitality and liveliness to the image which had been lacking in some of the more precise images, and even in figures such as the Viṣṇu from Arial (Fig. 219) which appears sloppy rather than animated. Perhaps the outer limit of animation in Bengal sculpture is seen in a rather small plaque showing the Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha which was found at Khalisady, in the district of 24 Parganas (Fig. 222). Diverging from the more common tradition of showing the Buddha as immobile and static, this representation depicts the Buddha lying on his right side with his legs bent and his head resting on his right hand. His smiling expression further defies the usual representations of this subject. In this image as well, we find the same rather fluid execution, with the bodies and other elements appearing as if created from a malleable material rather than chiselled out of stone. As in the Avalokiteśvara above, the freedom of execution is used to greatest advantage when the expressive content of the sculpture is less iconic and stiff than had been the case in the images of Sūrya and Viṣṇu. This unusual sculpture is difficult to date and to assess in terms of main traditions and trends of Bengal sculpture. However, I would suggest that it was made around the first part of the 11th century once again on the basis of the broad and fleshy body types, the double outlined lotus petals and the rather complicated (though not precisely executed) floral motif which occurs beneath the lotus pedestal. The rather smooth contours of the Buddha's body and its balloon-like surfaces further compare to those in Fig. 208 which we have also dated to this approximate period.

One last example of the freely-executed image type may be seen in another Buddhist sculpture which also relates to a great degree to the Buddhist images found at Vikramapura. This sculpture shows the Buddha Akṣobhya in his characteristic *bhūmiśpaśamudrā*, with his elephant *vāhana* beneath his throne, and was found at Bareya in the Nadia District of southern Bengal (Fig. 223). The same moulded quality which pervaded the preceding several images is again apparent here, as forms such as the vine out of which the five Jina Buddhas at the top of the stele emanate appear almost rubbery in quality. The main Buddha, with his tubular arms and swelled chest, as well as his broad, flat face, high *uṣṇīṣa* (with a gem on it) and prominent ears, distinctly recalls the Buddhas

from Vikramapura (Figs. 208-209). The depiction of these figures relates them to each other and allows the identification of an apparent regional unity in southern Bengal sculptures and also serves to differentiate them from their counterparts in Bihar. On the basis of comparison to the Vikramapura images, this sculpture should also be dated to the mid-11th century. In each of these examples and many others from southern Bengal, we are confronted with very clear representations of Buddhas other than the historical Buddha, Śākyamuni, who had been so popularly depicted in the art of Magadha. While the Jina Buddhas are sometimes found carved on separate stelae from Bihar, they do not occur with such frequency there, and these images, therefore, document the later phases of Buddhism in Bihar and Bengal as well as later phases of Pāla period art.

In bold contrast to the previous style in which images were depicted in a rather unrestrained manner are a number of images which have been found in southern Bengal showing the utmost of care and precision. One dramatic example of this may be seen in a torso of a deity (possibly Viṣṇu) which has been broken off at the knees and the neck (Fig. 224). This fragment was found at Jatardeul in the district of 24 Parganas. In style, it shows the artist's exploitation of the hardness of the dense, black stone so that not only are details executed in a crisp, precise manner, but also smooth areas of stone such as the skin of the chest have been polished to an almost metallic finish. As might be expected, a stiff and restrained appearance dominates the image. The entire effect contrasts sharply with the mobility of forms which was achieved in the preceding group of images and expresses a difference of intent on the part of the carvers. Most probably, this trend should not be viewed in a developmental sequence from the preceding images, but rather as a collateral tradition, again perhaps of the first half of the 11th century. The reason for this becomes clear by examination of another image bearing many similar characteristics but more easily dated because of its relative completeness. This sculpture shows Viṣṇu attended by his two consorts as well as other normal iconographic elements (Fig. 225). It was found at Batajore, Barisol District and, while exemplifying the sleekness and precision of the previous torso particularly in the treatment of the central image, other features allow a comparison to early 11th century sculptures from southern Bengal. Thus, a date contemporaneous with the style group showing freedom of execution of details may be suggested. Although Viṣṇu's chest is metallic and smooth and his garments and adornments seem attached to the surface of his body rather than falling across him, the depiction of the individual items bear comparison to the dated Viṣṇu from the reign of Govindacandra of the first third to half of the 11th century (Fig. 67). In particular, the necklace appearing almost as a collar relates to that in the Govindacandra piece. In addition, the complexity of the division of the pedestal into *rathas*, the prominence of the figure of Garuḍa, the nearly identical lotus pedestals, and the placement of donors suggest a probable similarity in date.

#### LATE 11TH AND 12TH CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS

The image types described above are outnumbered by far by sculptures which follow neither extreme—that is, by ones which are neither so free nor so precise as those in the above two groups of sculptures. A general ornateness also characterizes these images, as does a usual stiffness in the figures and a flatness in the forms. So numerous are the images of Viṣṇu and Sūrya in this style category that it is sometimes almost difficult to separate

the form from the subject being depicted. However, the limits as well as the variations of this type may be seen in a depiction of Sadāśiva from Krishnanagar, Nadia District (Fig. 226). This image may be dated by comparison to dated images from the mid-to-late 11th and first half of the 12th centuries (Figs. 73-75, 77-78). The general elaboration seen in the depiction of the lotus petals, the crowns, hair styles, jewelry, floriated motifs, *kīrttimukhas* and other features is a convincing demonstration of the contemporaneity of these images. More specifically, the Sadāśiva is reminiscent of the seated Bodhisattva dated in the forty-second year of the reign of Rāmapāla, ca. early 12th century (Fig. 75) which is, however, from Bihar and not Bengal. The most noteworthy elements of similarity include the flame motif along the perimeters of the stelae and the overall flatness and breadth of the main figures. This figure of Sadāśiva contrasts to the one dated in the 14th year of Gopāla (Fig. 77) which was found at Rajibpur, in northern Bengal, which is even more ornate and which has more three-dimensionality to the forms, and appears slightly later in date. Although this image is highly complex and possesses essential iconographic embellishments, it is by no means characterized by precision or measured carefulness, as had been seen for example in Fig. 224. And yet, the attention to individual jewels, floriated motifs, facial features and other small details sets it apart from Fig. 219, for example.

Two characteristics may be noted about this image which will help distinguish the styles of southern Bengal from those of northern Bengal. First, although the Sadāśiva seems quite ornate, some blank space exists behind the main figure. This relative spaciousness contrasts to most northern Bengal works which are generally fully embellished with detailed carving. The second characteristic is the relative size of the central figure in relation to the overall stele, which is larger than generally occurs in 11th and 12th century images from northern Bengal.<sup>72</sup>

An image of Ardhanārīśvara was found at Purapara, Dacca District, and represents another example of late 11th or first part of the 12th century ornate carving in southern Bengal (Fig. 227). In this case, a greater precision of carving than had been seen in the Sadāśiva is present. Similarly refined is a unique and iconographically enigmatic sculpture, which has been identified variously in previous literature, most recently as Apītakucā<sup>73</sup> (Fig. 228). The piece was found at Kāgajipādā, Vikramapura, Dacca District. The facial features are nearly identical to those of the preceding representation of Ardhanārīśvara as are the hair style and ornamentation, the high round breasts and narrow waist. These features, along with the embellished back-slab, the ornate lotus pedestal and vine scroll certify a later Pāla date. Quite probably, the image dates from the 12th century and may be compared to both the Sadāśiva from the reign of Gopāla (III) in the

<sup>72</sup> Compare to Fig. 235.

<sup>73</sup> Rakhal Das Banerji first published this piece as Pārvaṭī "in coitus with the phallus" ("Medieval Images in the Eastern Circle," *ASIAR*, 1924-25, p. 155). Later, the discoverer of the piece, Bhattasali, identified it tentatively as Mahāmāyā (*Iconography*, pp. 192-93). This view was reinforced by Jitendra Nath Banerjea (*Hindu Iconography*, p. 509); and "The Kāgajipādā Sculpture," in *Nalini Kanta Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, ed. A. B. M. Habibullah [Dacca: Dacca Museum, 1966], pp. 151-153). Most recently, it has been reexamined by Mukhlesur Rahman ("The So-called Mahamaya Image from Kagajipara," *JVRM* I, 1 [1972]:68-74) and identified as Apītakucā by Dipak Chandra Bhattacharyya ("An Apītakucā Image from Kagajipara, Bangladesh," *Artibus Asiae* XXXVI, 1-2 [1974]:89-94). The Apītakucā identification has much to recommend it, although it hinges partly on the perception of the lower portion of the goddess's body as being merged with the *liṅga*. As Rahman points out, however, the goddess seems to be standing behind the phallus rather than being merged with it or emerging from it.

12th century (Fig. 77) and that of Pārvaṭī from the third year of Madanapāla's reign, also in the 12th century (Fig. 78). Its conformity to southern Bengal norms is seen in the small area of blank space around the head of the goddess. An image such as this represents a high point in the southern Bengal sculpture tradition, both in terms of the sculptural quality of the piece as well as its iconographic originality.

A Viṣṇu image from southern Bengal demonstrates a possible trend of the 12th century and later in this region. The piece (Fig. 229) was found at Mahākali village, Munshigañj, Vikramapura, Dacca District, and shows Viṣṇu in a style and manner similar to the previous images of Sadāśiva, Ardhanārīśvara and Apītakucā. By virtue of its complexity, detailed manner, facial features and jewelry, it may be dated to the 12th century as well.

#### BENGAL AND ORISSA INTERFACE STYLE

Before turning to the sculptural developments of northern Bengal, mention should be made of a hybrid style complex which developed in some of the southwestern regions of Bengal and adjacent portions of Orissa.<sup>74</sup> Just as the Pāla formulations blended with those from central and western India in the Pāla-Cedi style of northwestern Bihar during certain periods of history,<sup>75</sup> a mixed Bengal/Orissa style idiom seems to have also occurred.<sup>76</sup>

The district of Purulia (formerly Manbhum) has at various times been part of Orissa, or, alternately, part of Bengal. A distinctive art style, leaning heavily towards the Orissan formulations, was in strong evidence in that region in approximately the 10th-12th centuries at sites such as Boram. An image of Durgā Mahiṣāsūramardīnī from Purulia District (Fig. 230) typifies the Orissan influenced style of this region from approximately the late 11th or 12th century. While difficult to compare to typical Pāla-Sena period images, the elaborate pedestal and full-breasted, narrow-waisted figure suggest a late date. While related to sculptures found at sites such as Khiching in Orissa, several distinctive features are to be noted. An overall squareness to the forms is seen in the shape of the face, the shoulders of the figure, and the repetition of the architectural levels behind the figure. Even the facial features seem to be pulled in a horizontal or lateral direction. The same squareness to the forms of the body, face and head-dress may be seen in a representation of Viṣṇu which was found at Bhandarhati in the Hooghly District of Bengal (Fig. 231). This figure of Viṣṇu perhaps most clearly represents the adaptation of Orissan forms to idioms and traditions of Bengal designs. Thus, the squareness of the figure, the breadth of the architectural arch behind his head and even the textured diaper design at the sides of the stele may be said to derive from Orissan models. The diaper pattern occurs commonly in Orissan sculptures and is seen along the pedestal in the image of Durgā from Purulia. However, the use of the black stone common to most Pāla-Sena period sculptures, the floriated lotus petals and the vine beneath them, the jewelry worn by the god and to some extent the treatment of the facial features of Viṣṇu reflect Bengal modes. In addition, the consorts of Viṣṇu in attendance at his sides clearly seem to follow Pāla models. A date of late 11th or even early 12th century may be assigned to the work in spite of its dissimilarity to the usual Bengal and Bihar works of that period. An examination of the lotus petals of the central pedestal relates them to those on dated sculptures from this range of dates

<sup>74</sup> Bengal is adjacent to Bihar on the west and to Orissa in the southwest.

<sup>75</sup> See pp. 131-32 above.

<sup>76</sup> This has been discussed in Huntington, "Some Aspects," pp. 23-25.

(Figs. 73-75, 77-78), and the lotuses upon which Viṣṇu's two consorts stand are reminiscent of those of the dated Avalokiteśvara from Kiul from the reign of Gopāla (III) (Fig. 76).

It is interesting to note that many of the Orissan sculptures of this period show the central figure within an arch or a trilobate form, similar to that present in the above illustration. Since this feature was not particularly common in Bihar sculptures of this period, it is interesting to postulate that this feature came into Bengal sculpture not from Bihar but rather from Orissa. Further, it might be suggested that the general breadth and flatness of the figures in many southern Bengal carvings might also be a reflection of influence from the southwest regions of Bengal and even Orissa.<sup>77</sup> Since this flatness and breadth is decidedly common in southern Bengal sculpture but not in northern schools, a geographic limitation of the aesthetic would be entirely possible. While it cannot be verified at the present time because of lack of enough excavated and associated material, it has come to my attention that the western districts of southern Bengal such as Midnapore, Bankura, Burdwan, Birbhum and Purulia have yielded many more sculptures bearing this flatness and squareness than have the districts further to the east. This assertion, if it may someday be supported, would serve to further define regional developments of Bengal sculptures. Numerous other examples from these regions besides the two given above could be used to document this style blend.

#### 11TH-12TH CENTURY STYLES OF NORTHERN BENGAL

In the early Pāla period, that is, before around 1025 A.D., the art of northern Bengal was in large measure derivative of the styles of Magadha and Aṅga. It has been shown that even the images and architectural decorations which were found at sites such as Pāhārpur and Mahāsthāngarh were strongly under the sway of late Guptan forms and, in some ways, were virtually indistinguishable from Bihar counterparts. However, at about the same time that Vikramapura and other sites in southern Bengal began to manifest artistic independence from Bihar, a similar phenomenon seems to have occurred in northern Bengal. These two regions, then, after about 1025 A.D., the reign of Mahīpāla, began to supplant Magadha and perhaps Aṅga as the artistic center of the eastern Indian regions, as great numbers of images, mostly Brahmanical in subject matter, began to be produced. Unfortunately, only a few major art yielding sites in northern Bengal are known to us and even these are difficult to relate to any given style of carving. The discussion of northern Bengal, therefore, must be general as had been the case for southern Bengal. Even though distinctly new styles grew up in the districts of northern Bengal, they remained much more related to Bihar types than did their counterparts in southern Bengal. This may be explained, to some degree, by the fact that the northern Bengal region is roughly adjacent to the religious and artistic heartlands of Bihar, Aṅga and Magadha, while southern Bengal is alongside the more peripheral sections of Bihar culture.

#### BURMO-BENGALI BUDDHIST STYLE IN NORTH BENGAL

A number of Buddhist images have been found in northern Bengal which conform to the stylistic criteria defined for the Burmo-Bengali style of sculptures.<sup>78</sup> The widespread

<sup>77</sup> For example, see Figs. 218, 221, 226.

<sup>78</sup> See pp. 168-9 above.



occurrence of such images indicates that they were manifestations of an active and perhaps important trend of Bengali stone carving. A representation of a standing Buddha attended by Brahmā and Indra showing the Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa was found at Kirtail, Rajshahi District (Fig. 232). The thick limbs, broad shoulders and face are generally reminiscent of the figures of the Buddhas found at Vikramapura in southern Bengal (Figs. 208-209), as are the knobby representation of hair, the facial features, prominent ear lobes and clinging drapery which is apparent only at the edges. In addition, the overall flatness of the sculpture with the background elements carved in low relief and reduced to a minimum recalls the Vikramapura images. The similarity to them, in fact, suggests a date in the mid-11th century for the Kirtail piece as well. Such comparisons are problematic since it is impossible to determine whether several workshops produced these images, whether drawings were widely disseminated and led to similar styles and types, or whether itinerant craftsmen were responsible for the geographic distribution. The ties to Burmese art of approximately the same date have already been referred to and need not be discussed here. Since literally dozens of images both in stone and in metal from Burma relate to this style, and since the Bengal examples are quite distinctive from other art styles which grew up in that region in the 11th and 12th centuries, further study would undoubtedly yield much information about Buddhist developments at that time.

#### OTHER BUDDHIST IMAGES

A number of other Buddhist images from northern Bengal maintain the aesthetic of rather broad and full body forms yet combine these with decorated back-slabs that are more related to other Bihar and Bengal traditions. A figure of Śyāma Tārā from Nimdighi, Rajshahi District (Fig. 233) has a broad and rather flat face, similar to that seen in the Buddha from Kirtail (Fig. 232). While this facial type may be the depiction of a racial strain as well as a stylistic convention, the resemblance is nonetheless present. A date no earlier than the 11th century and perhaps as late as the 12th century is suggested by the hair style worn by Śyāma Tārā, in which a large bun of hair is placed at the side of her neck, a feature seen on a number of late images, and also by the very unusual triple row of lotus petals on her pedestal. The representations of the five Jina Buddhas above her head, while not at all unusual iconographically, further serve to illustrate a resemblance between this image and the previous Buddha, for in style, their puffy bodies, broad faces and high *uṣṇīṣas* are clear reminders of what has been termed the Burmo-Bengali style, even though the rest of the image does not fall in that category. The pointed halos as well as the thrones upon which the Buddhas sit, especially the unusual shape of the cross-bar of the throne backs, are clearly related to those seen in the Buddha from Kirtail.

Still another image from Rajshahi District reflects what might be a further aspect of this style type. A figure of Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara from Niyamatpur (Fig. 234) probably dates from the mid-to-late part of the 11th or the 12th century by virtue of some shared characteristics with the previous Buddhist images. While many individual differences occur which may later be redefined as a specific substyle or style group, the general similarities in the broad and fleshy treatment of the body and face, the relative flatness of the carving of the back-slab and the general simplicity of the overall scheme bear comparison, especially in that they diverge so radically from the general tenor of northern Bengali sculptures to be defined below. A distinction from images we have noted before in

both Bihar and Bengal is the treatment of the lotus petals of the seat as rather pointed, narrow forms. Another interesting feature is the presence of the motif at the very top of the back-slab which may not be defined as a *kīrtimukha* or a floral motif by relation to any other examples we have seen. It is possible that the motif itself had degenerated from the original specific form and here appears only as a standard part of the scheme of such a stele with no clear reference to a determinable element.

#### BRAHMANICAL SCULPTURES IN A FLATTENED STYLE

The flatness of form seen in the preceding images is also found in a number of Brahmanical sculptures which have been found in northern Bengal. However, by comparison to the Buddhist images, the Brahmanical ones are, in general, more ornate, though still flatly carved. A depiction of Sadāśiva from Jaminkari Tapar, Dinajpur District (Fig. 235), for example, relates in its overall flatness to the Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara from Niyamatpur (Fig. 234). Such images are noteworthy among the extant examples from northern Bengal because they differ from the more popular, deeply carved examples to be discussed below. In fact, it might almost be suggested that the work, and others of its type, were manufactured in southern Bengal, except that they do betray some features more generally associated with the northern developments. In this case, for example, the central figure is small in relation to the overall size of the stele, in contrast to the more usual proportions of southern Bengal works (Fig. 226). The trilobate arch in the Sadāśiva image is by now a fairly common motif in Bengal sculpture, and is known only occasionally in the art of Bihar (Figs. 34-35). It is difficult to date the sculptures in this style, if, indeed, these somewhat disparate examples might be grouped together as a style, but a general mid-to-late 11th or 12th century date might be suggested again due to a lack of specifically identifiable datable traits.

The flattened style seen in the Sadāśiva above appears in a number of other images found in north Bengal. A sculpture showing Brahmā is more precise in its technical execution, but shares many features with the Sadāśiva. This image (Fig. 236) was found at Jianagar in the Bogra District of north Bengal. The central figure is again rather small in comparison to the back-slab and the elements of the back-slab are flatly carved. The high pointed stele, the elaborate hair style of Brahmā and the general floriation of the elements suggests a mid-to-late 11th-12th century date, similar to the preceding figures.

#### ELABORATE STYLE OF NORTH BENGAL

In direct contrast to the preceding images, the more dominant trend in northern Bengal sculptures seems to be towards heavy ornamentation of the back-slab surface and an emphasis on a luxurious beauty to the forms. Numerous images, both Buddhist and Brahmanical, may be used to demonstrate this stylistic and aesthetic preference and to contrast these sculptures from those found in southern Bengal. In many respects, these images are similar to some sculptures from Magadha and Aṅga.

An outstanding example of the northern Bengal propensity for complicated form may be seen in a representation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara which was found at Tapan-dighi, West Dinajpur District (Fig. 237). In this case, the elaboration of iconographic details in no way detracts from the overall harmony and beauty of the forms and, thus, while detailed, the image is not cluttered. The success of this style is partly achieved by the

fact that, as in many other northern Bengal sculptures, the central image is reduced in scale compared to the overall size of the stele so that the central figure appears to be in a spacious ambience. This may be contrasted, for example, with the image of Sadāśiva from Krishnanagar, in the Nadia District of southern Bengal (Fig. 226) in which the arms of the deity are barely contained within the perimeters of the stele. All of the decorative elements in the representation of Avalokiteśvara are deeply carved and stand in bold relief from the back-slab. In particular, the five Jina Buddhas and *vidyādhara*s appear detached from the background. The face of the Bodhisattva is of the Bengal ethnic type, but the facial expression has a softness to it that, combined with his relaxed body posture, creates a lively and charming effect. In many respects, this differs from most of the images which were seen from southern Bengal in which a stiffness characterized the figures.<sup>79</sup> Because of the complexity of the forms, the elongated stele and the diminution of the central figure, the image should be dated to the end of the 11th or the beginning of the 12th century. It may be compared both for dating purposes as well as style to images which have been found in Bihar such as the Naulāgarh pedestal dated in the twenty-fourth year of Vīgrahapāla (III) around the third quarter of the 11th century (Fig. 73). The sense of beauty and refinement and almost mathematical precision in the arrangement of the elements of the image has been seen in a number of Bihar sculptures, particularly those from the region of Aṅga which is directly adjacent to northern Bengal. While the individual stylistic characteristics differ, these features may be seen, for example, in the Simhanāda Avalokiteśvara which was found at Sultāngaṅj in the Bhagalpur District (Fig. 155) and in the Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara from Colgong, also in the Bhagalpur District (Fig. 157). In both the images from Aṅga, as well as those from north Bengal, part of this tendency to exploit the stone by detailed carving may have arisen out of the fact that both of these regions had access to the very dense, black stone which was quarried from the Rājmaḥāl Hills in the interface region between these two areas. Further west in Magadha, the greyish, porous stone of Gaya was more characteristically used and, in southern Bengal, all varieties of stone from dense to coarse seem to have been employed.

A second Buddhist image from Dinajpur District further illustrates the characteristics of this style (Fig. 238). While the Buddha himself is sleekly polished, the back-slab is again encrusted with thickly carved details. The head-dresses of the Bodhisattvas attending the main figure as well as their decoration and ornamentation are quite similar to those in the previous Avalokiteśvara, and a similar date, late 11th-early 12th century, may be assigned to the piece.

In Brahmanical images as well, this richly decorated style is commonly found. A sculpture which may be identified from the erect phallus and bull *vāhana* as a form of Śiva was found at Gaṇeśpur in the Rajshahi District (Fig. 239). The richness of the various details of the stele, such as the floriated motifs of the back-slab, the lotus petals and Śiva's crown and ornamentation, all bear comparison to the two preceding sculptures. As in the case of the Avalokiteśvara, a rather relaxed posture for the figure and a softly smiling face add to the liveliness created by the three-dimensionality of the forms. Again, a late 11th or early 12th century date is probable, by comparison to the Naulāgarh pedestal (Fig. 73) or the Sadāśiva from the 14th year of Gopāla (III) (Fig. 77). However, the softness of this figure contrasts with the stiffness of the Sadāśiva and suggests the earlier date.

<sup>79</sup> Compare to Figs. 228, 229, etc.

Further examples of this type and probable date may be seen in a representation of Kārttikeya from Mahātore, Dinajpur (Fig. 240) and one of Sūrya from Chopra, Niyamatpur in Rajshahi District (Fig. 241). While the sense of plasticity of the Sūrya seems reduced because of the flat lighting in the photograph, in reality, the image is richly carved. Liveliness is seen in the Kārttikeya who sits askew on his peacock mount while Sūrya is shown in his rarely varied frontal position. The female attendants of Kārttikeya have an added animation to them in their action of looking up towards the main figure. This variety in posture and attribute is frequently seen in northern Bengal sculpture even of the 12th century and may be contrasted to the southern Bengal images which became stereotyped.

Another figure of Sūrya, from Baria, Rajshahi District (Fig. 242), may have been made at the same approximate time, ca. late 11th-early 12th century. But here, as in a number of other northern Bengali images, the reduced size of the central figure compared to the overall stele is enhanced by the presence of a trilobate arch. Thus, although Sūrya himself is similar in body proportions and form to the preceding Sūrya, the wide space around him creates a different effect. As is common in northern Bengal sculptures of this style, the trilobate arch is shown with the central lobe much larger than the other two. This contrasts to most of the forms which we had seen in southern Bengal, and is a feature which adds visual interest to the image. Along with the lively attendants and deep carving of the image, this feature serves to create an appealing icon from the visual point of view.

There seems to be no end, in fact, to the northern Bengal carver's ingenuity in finding ways to make his images interesting and alive from a visual standpoint. A sculpture of Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara from Chowrapara, Rajshahi District (Fig. 243), again from the same approximate date, enjoys the liveliness afforded by the deep carving, his relaxed posture, smiling countenance and the animated expressions of his attendant figures. In addition, the sculptor has broken away from the traditional arrangement of the five Jina Buddhas in a semicircle at the top of the stele and, instead, has interrupted their placement by the location of the *vidyādhara*s above the two lower Buddhas.<sup>80</sup> Another feature of interest is the fact that the artist has deliberately avoided the placement of the blossom held in each hand of the Bodhisattva on a level. Thus, the one held in the right hand is barely above the shoulder line while the one in the left hand is raised slightly. The visual interest which is afforded by these devices belies the often repeated refrain that the 11th and 12th century carvings of Bihar and Bengal are static and degenerate. It should, however, be noted that this characteristic seems to be especially valid for northern Bengal. Perhaps some of the development away from rigidity in northern Bengal may be explained by proximity to Bihar where even late images frequently were executed without strict symmetry. It is even possible that Magadhan and Aṅgan artists might have left Bihar to go to Bengal in the 11th and 12th centuries since there was more work to be done there, thus bringing with them many Bihari conventions.

The size of the Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara as related to the back-slab is much larger than in the preceding few images. Indeed, many of the sculptures from northern Bengal do not conform to the previously described proportions, although other features remain constant, and thus characteristic of the northern style. An image of Sūrya, from Gaur,

<sup>80</sup> Another rare instance of such an intrusion into a regular iconographic sequence occurred in Fig. 153 from Antichak, where the life scenes of the Buddha were interrupted by the placement of Bodhisattvas.

Maldah District (Fig. 244), is not far removed in style from the Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara above, and may be of the same approximate late 11th-early 12th century date. The deeply carved elements of the back-slab, the central figure created nearly in the round from the shoulders to the ankles and the general filling of space of the stele are worthy of notice. In addition, the attendant figures, particularly the females, are turned in space more completely than any figures we have noted thus far in Bihar or Bengal relief sculptures. This awareness of space in a sense that figures are actually turning on an axis is another characteristic that is found frequently in northern Bengal sculptures as will be discussed below. Once again, it is an artistic device that adds a sense of actuality to the figures and animates the entire image. Thus, in a work where the central figure is strictly controlled by iconography and may not stand even in a relaxed posture, the sculptor has still been able to add much to the work by the placement of minor figures in space.

Several other features of this image are worth noticing. Behind Sūrya there is a halo of flame which comes to a point at the tip of his crown. The element is fairly rare in Bengal sculptures, although a few examples from southern Bengal and several from the northern region have been found. However, it is difficult to say whether this is a stylistic or an iconographic feature until more images are discovered. Another unusual characteristic in this sculpture is the garment worn by Sūrya, which covers his legs almost like a pair of pants beyond his knees to the top of his boots, and has a piece of cloth hanging across his thigh. Normally, the knees and part of the calf would be uncovered. The long garment he wears is, in fact, most similar to that worn by the preceding Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 243). In contrast to so many of the southern Bengal Sūryas which had knotted straps across their chests (Figs. 217-218), the present image and others from northern Bengal generally lack that feature. In this example, a vest of leather or metal or some other stiff material seems to be worn, as indicated by the rigid waist-band and crossing.

A rather common iconographic type in the later Pāla period in Bengal is the free-standing representation of Garuḍa, the vehicle of Viṣṇu, in a kneeling posture with his hands in *añjalimudrā*. Some of these images were meant to be placed atop a pillar facing a Viṣṇu temple in the same manner that is commonly seen in Nepal. A particularly fine example of such a depiction, from Chowrakasba, Rajshahi District, belongs to the same school of technical proficiency, refined carving, and elaborate detailing that is characteristic of so many northern Bengal sculptures (Figs. 245-246). Probably also datable to the last part of the 11th or the early 12th century on the basis of comparison to the preceding group of images, its main features include deeply-carved forms, elaborate floral motifs, an animated posture and sweet facial expression. Once again, the elaboration of detail does not imply extra effort for its own sake, but helps to enhance the image. The complete rendering of the image in front and back arises from its probable placement in a position which allowed it to be viewed from all sides. The treatment of the eyes, round and wide open, is a feature which occurs frequently on both Sūrya and Garuḍa images from Bengal. It is occasionally found in Bihar, but seems to be a later Pāla, primarily Bengali, tradition, arising from either stylistic or iconographic considerations.

#### 12TH CENTURY IMAGES FROM NORTH BENGAL

The previous images, while possibly dating from around the turn of the 12th century, differ in a few ways from sculptures which can almost certainly be dated to the 12th cen-

tury. A figure of Viṣṇu from Balurghāt, West Dinajpur District (Fig. 247) continues the tradition of deep carving, refined technique and the tendency to fill all available space on the stele with decorated elements. However, Viṣṇu and his two consorts have become slightly more solid in their body proportions and perhaps slightly less youthful appearing than the late 11th or early 12th century images. The broad faces of all three figures, the large round breasts of the consorts and their heavy hips recall those features in the image of Caṇḍī (Fig. 82) dated by inscription to the 12th century. While the dated piece may be said to show a degeneration of the earlier style in the stunted and stiff appearance of the figure and in the lack of clarity visible in the various motifs of the back-slab, the figures in the Viṣṇu image also tend towards that stylistic trend. Thus, the clarity of the back-slab elements and the still lively figures and facial features suggest that the Viṣṇu image was executed some time before the Caṇḍī, although the heaviness of the forms indicate at least a 12th century date. The upturned *makara*-ends of the cross-bars behind Viṣṇu are a feature developed later in the art of Nepal and Tibet.

A representation of a reclining mother and child, possibly Gaurī with Sadyojāta Śiva,<sup>81</sup> from Chowrakasba, Rajshahi District (Fig. 248), is another demonstration of the 12th century trend towards heaviness of the body forms. The broad face, very large breasts and reduced size of the lower half of the body of the central figure indeed recall the type of distortion that occurs in the dated Caṇḍī (Fig. 82). It should be observed that the increased heaviness of the body forms and breadth to the face is quite different from the width we observed in some southern Bengal images as well as that which was noted in relation to some of the Burmo-Bengali style Buddhist sculptures. In the southern Bengal pieces, a flatness was also implied as if the forms had actually been stretched in a lateral fashion. In the Buddhist pieces, a puffed quality lacking a muscular and weighty solidity was suggested. Here, the forms are indeed heavy and are not only broad, but since they maintain the earlier northern Bengal tendencies towards deep carving, are also imbued with a feeling of three-dimensionality. It may also be mentioned that the subject matter represented here is not unusual to north Bengali iconography. Numerous examples of this subject have been found in that region from the later Pāla period and a few have also been found in southern Bengal and Bihar.

The monumentality of these heavy figures is easily seen in a virtually free-standing sculpture of the river goddess Gaṅgā, standing atop her *makara* mount, which was found at Padumshar tank, one of the leading art yielding sites in northern Bengal, in Rajshahi District (Fig. 249). The goddess is approximately life size and the heavy, solid forms of her body with her full hips and large breasts, along with the wide face, recall the previous image as well as the dated sculpture of Caṇḍī, again suggesting a 12th century date. The fact that the figure is nearly free-standing (although probably meant to be seen from one point of view only) is significant in that it serves almost as an end point in the sculptural

<sup>81</sup> The correct identification of this figure has long been a subject for debate in the Brahmanical iconography of Bengal stone sculptures. Bhattasali first suggested that the subject depicted Sadyojāta Śiva (*Iconography*, pp. 134-142), and recently, epigraphic evidence has seemed to support this identification (see the Appendix, no. 28). Also see W. Norman Brown, "The Identification of Certain Indian Reclining 'Mother and Child' Sculptures," in *Moriz Winternitz, 1863-23. Dezember-1933*, edited by Otto Stein and Wilhelm Gampert (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1933), pp. 322-25; Nirad Bandhu Sanyal, "The 'Mother and Child' Images of Bengal," *Annual Report of the Varendra Research Society*, 1928-29, pp. 19-22. Kramrisch identifies the subject as Śiva Gṛhpati. See Stella Kramrisch, *Manifestations of Shiva* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1981), p. 83.

developments we have been tracing in this study. The earliest figures from the pre-Pāla and early Pāla periods, we recall, were not deeply carved, but over the course of centuries, a gradual liberation of form from the back-slab occurred. In this case, the heaviness of the female body increases the suggestion of a free-standing figure, which is nearly a complete change from the attachment of the form to the almost ever-present back-slab. The concept of being free-standing and relating to a spatial ambience is increased in this image by the fact that the *tribhaṅga* posture of the goddess has a torsion to it. Possibly, the Gaṅgā was paired with a representation of Yamunā, the two perhaps flanking and turning towards a doorway, thus explaining this particular pose.

Another representation of Gaṅgā found in north Bengal shows similar spatial concepts, although it is distinctly the product of a different atelier, as may be discerned by the representation of the figure itself and the back-slab. The image (Fig. 250) was found at Bhadrāśīla, in West Dinajpur District. Although at first its appearance might suggest that it was not the product of a northern Bengal workshop, similarities in specific details to other northern Bengal images indicate that indeed this is possible. The date may be ascertained by examination of the two female attendants in particular, whose broad faces and bodies and large round earrings suggest the forms already described for the 12th century. As in the previous sculpture of Gaṅgā, the central figure riding on her *makara* vehicle stands in a *tribhaṅga* posture which also implies a torsion in space. She is nearly free-standing, or rather detached, from the back-slab, with the lower portion of her body seeming to project forward slightly more than the top. The movement in space of her two attendants, especially the one on the left as she holds the umbrella over Gaṅgā's head, goes beyond even that which had been seen in earlier figures such as the attendants to Sūrya in Fig. 244, since they truly appear as if they are in motion and not simply on a revolving axis. These figures, in fact, are quite suggestive of Nepali attendant figures of the 14th and 15th centuries. Since the Pāla-Sena period sculptures of Bihar and Bengal were predecessors for the Nepali types, this comparison is not at all surprising. Further, the appearance of the *makaras* of the throne back as they seem to extend upwards rather than on a strict horizontal also suggests Nepali forms as has already been implied in connection with the Viṣṇu in Fig. 247.

A number of other sculptures found in northern Bengal show figures in positions which suggest movement in space and lack the strict frontality of earlier images. One of these, found at Briddhigrām, Bogra District, depicts a woman churning butter while a small boy appears to steal some from the pot, undoubtedly depicting Kṛṣṇa, the Butter Thief (Fig. 251). Although a flatness in the carving of the figures as well as the background elements marks a change from the previous two figures, the representation of the woman as well as her position in space leave little doubt that the image arises from a similar artistic tradition. Her full, round breasts, heavy hips, round face, large circular earrings and hair style with a large bun at the side of her head are all characteristics that are typical in the 12th century. The flatness of the carving itself may be a holdover from such traditions as seen in the Burmo-Bengali style, or may be simply a new development at this time. The figure in this case is in a near profile position—extremely unusual for sculptures in this relief-producing region. Whereas on a Hindu temple of similar date one would not be surprised at seeing figures moving in space freely, on a Pāla-Sena stele, this representation is remarkable.

Besides the visual characteristics of this sculpture, it is extremely important from the iconographic point of view, and for that reason, serves as an ideal end point in our discussion of the stone sculptures of Bihar and Bengal. Specifically, it seems to anticipate the Kṛṣṇa worship which became so popular in Bengal under teachers such as Caitanya in the 16th century, a religious movement which was heralded in the Sena period when Jayadeva, the court poet of Lakṣmaṇasena, wrote the *Gītā Govinda*. Thus, the end point of the stone sculpture tradition of the Pāla and Sena periods seems to anticipate the beginning of yet another major phase of religious activity in the eastern Indian regions.

#### CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BENGAL SCHOOLS OF STONE SCULPTURE

Although they are perhaps more difficult to identify and assess than their Bihar counterparts, the Bengal styles of stone sculpture were nevertheless numerous, original and generally distinctive. Because of what must have been extensive dissemination of both works of art and artists, compared to the patterns established in Bihar, broad, regional patterns, as opposed to site developments, can be discussed. Of course, major centers, such as the Buddhist monasteries at Pāhārpur, Mahāsthāngaṛh, Lalmai-Maināmatī, and Hindu cities, such as Vikramapura and others, must certainly have had long-standing schools of craftsmen whose works may someday be assigned to more specific artistic developments than has been possible here. The broad distinctions between the northern and southern Bengal sculpture styles discussed suggest some relationship to the natural and political boundaries within ancient Bengal itself, although, again, as the territories of some of the lesser known Bengali dynasties, such as the Candras, Varmans, Khadgas and others, become more established, further refinements of the present definitions would be in order.

It is clear that the Bengal traditions were established early, as visible from the remains at sites like Pāhārpur and Mahāsthāngaṛh. However, it is also evident that they developed in concert with the prevalent trends in Bihar, at least up until around the 11th century, when the Bengal works seem to come into their florescence. The underlying social, historical and cultural reasons which might help explain the artistic developments in Bengal are more enigmatic than those of Bihar, where the Buddhist traditions are fairly well documented, and thus, the Bengal schools of art offer tantalizing material for future research.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# METAL SCULPTURE OF BENGAL

The study of Bengal metal images must be limited to the few hoards which have been found as well as the scattered stray discoveries which have been made. As in the instance of the stone sculptures from Bengal, the earliest metal images tend to be Buddhist in subject matter, while the later ones are primarily Brahmanical. Interestingly, although early Bengali stone sculptures seem very much related to Bihar forms through about the 11th century, the metal tradition displays a number of very distinctive features from the very beginning, especially in southeastern Bengal. Further, while the Bengali stone sculptures seemed to fall within broad style groupings, more refined patterns seem to emerge for metal works at certain sites. Thus, while a general southern Bengal designation was used for stone sculptures from the Vaṅga, Samatāṭa and Harikela regions, this is not viable for the extant metal works. In particular, a highly distinctive school of metal casting seems to have existed in the southeastern Bengal region of Samatāṭa, which is set apart from idioms seen in other parts of Bengal.

### SOUTHEASTERN BENGAL

#### COMILLA DISTRICT: LALMAI-MAINĀMATĪ

The majority of works of art which have been recovered from southeast Bengal, and the Comilla District in particular, were found at sites in the Lalmai-Maināmatī Hills. Although a paucity of stone carvings has been found there,<sup>1</sup> approximately one hundred metal sculptures have been discovered, almost all of which are from Śālban Vihāra. Unfortunately, an extensive recent theft at the Maināmatī Site Museum, where most of the metal pieces were housed, has left us with little information about the metal-casting tradition, since few of the pieces had even been photographed. The remaining examples, however, are of considerable interest, and, along with the few which had been published in earlier reports, provide some indication of the tradition of metal working in this region.

A striking resemblance between a sculpture of a seated Bodhisattva from Maināmatī (Fig. 252) and the image of Sarvvāṇī from the Khaḍga dynasty, ca. late 7th-early 8th century (Fig. 26), suggests that the two works were not only made around the same time, but that they were part of a common stylistic milieu. Since the Khaḍga Sarvvāṇī was also found in the Comilla District, this is not surprising. Similar features include the almost heart-shaped form of the lotus petals, the shapes of the *prabhāmaṇḍalas*, and the treatment of the outer bead and intermittent flame motif around the rim of the *prabhāmaṇḍalas*. In addition, both works make use of strut-like forms to unify the central figure and *prabhāmaṇḍala*. Inscriptional evidence from the Lalmai-Maināmatī sites indicates that the

7th and 8th centuries were a period of great florescence during which extensive building and art production took place,<sup>2</sup> and thus, this sculpture may represent a popular style about which we know rather little. The resemblance between this sculpture and works from Nālandā of approximately the same date (Fig. 162) suggests that the artistic production at Buddhist sites throughout the entire Bihar and Bengal region during the late 7th and early 8th centuries was part of a common burgeoning of religion, patronage and culture, and that extensive contact between them existed. However, the unification of styles between Bihar and Bengal seen in stone sculpture prior to around the time of Mahīpāla I<sup>3</sup> is not particularly the case in metal images, for a great deal of individuality is seen in the early metal sculpture styles of Bengal.

Some such distinctiveness may be noted in a number of other metal images from Maināmatī, such as a representation of a seated Mañjuśrī Kumāra from Śālban Vihāra (Fig. 253). On the basis of comparison to works from other sites, particularly Nālandā, it may be surmised that this piece was made around the early-to-mid-9th century. Its refined execution, visible in the treatment of the lotus petals, the relaxed ease of the main figure and the detailing of the elephants and lions beneath the Bodhisattva's seat, seems indicative of the mastery achieved by Bihar and Bengal metal workers around the time of Devapāla. Although this specific posture is rather unusual among the surviving example of Bihar-Bengal art, the proportions of the body and its general naturalism compare well with works from Nālandā of about this time (Figs. 164, 165), as do the lotus petals. What appear to be local stylistic characteristics are the treatment of the outer rim of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* with its several rows of detailed decoration and the increased height of the overall image, achieved by having a base topped by a lotus pedestal, which in turn bears the lion or elephant motif, that in other styles has generally occurred at the sides of the main figure (Fig. 165), surmounted by the Bodhisattva himself seated on some type of cushion or other seat. A very similar configuration is found in the art of Jhewāri (Fig. 259) and may have been a widespread characteristic in southeastern Bengal. The whole is unified by an elongated *prabhāmaṇḍala* which is rounded at the top but which creates an ovoid shape to the entire work. This verticality is notable in a number of other surviving metal images from the Lalmai-Maināmatī area and may have been a popular local characteristic. It is also notable that the halo is treated as a solid sheet of metal, not an open shape, in contrast to the usual Bihar pattern for this early date.

#### MISCELLANEOUS FINDS IN SOUTHEAST BENGAL

Apparently, this elevated pedestal and overall heightened effect was maintained in the art tradition of southeastern Bengal for some time, as it persists in a representation of a goddess identified as Sitātapatrā,<sup>4</sup> which was discovered in the Comilla District, although its specific find-spot is not recorded (Fig. 254). At first glance, this image might seem to be of the same date as the preceding example due to the rather similar formats and configurations that the two works present; however, that the Sitātapatrā is at least somewhat later, probably dating from the late 9th century, may be suggested from the treatment of the

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 164-65 above.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 166 above.

<sup>4</sup> Bhattasali, *Iconography*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 165 above.



lotus petals with their double-outlined forms and the generally more elaborate appearance of the work. This image bears comparison to the representation of Cuṇḍā from Nālandā (Fig. 169), which was also made around that time. Interestingly, the Nālandā piece is characterized by the effect of a raised pedestal, a rather unusual feature at Nālandā and perhaps suggestive of contact between the two regions. The Nālandā example, however, is conceived in much more three-dimensional terms, with the elements bearing the lotus seat aloft not restricted to the frontal plane of the work.

Associations with works found in Comilla District are also seen in a remarkable, although puzzling, image of Lokanātha which was recovered from Bandarbazar, in Sylhet town, Sylhet District (Fig. 255). Measuring some 81.5 cm. in height, it is one of the largest of the early metal pieces from Bengal, and thus must have been the product of a fairly well-established metal working tradition. However, so few works have been discovered in the Sylhet region that it may be assumed that this work was transported from elsewhere, perhaps even Comilla District and the Lalmai-Maināmaṭi region, since it shares a number of features apparently characteristic of that area. In particular, the elongated halo and its solid, rather than open, form are two features apparently favored by Comilla District artists. This image possibly dates from the 9th century, on the basis of its resemblance to the two preceding examples. As in the case of the seated Mañjuśrī Kumāra (Fig. 253) which had an unusual configuration of designs around the rim of the halo, this image is also quite distinctive in the rather floriated treatment of the flames around the outer rim, since this does not find counterparts in the known traditions of Bihar.

#### CHITTAGONG DISTRICT: JHEWĀRI

In the most southeasterly portion of Bengal, the Chittagong District was apparently a rich center of Buddhist religious activity and distinctive artistic production. Although the materials which have been discovered at Jhewāri are the most well-known remains from this region, finds have been made elsewhere. In 1932, Narendra Nath Law published a group of Buddhist metal images which he had been shown on his visit in 1927 to an active Buddhist monastery at Chittagong.<sup>5</sup> The pieces had been collected from the Chittagong District, and in some instances, the specific find-spots had been noted. While it is not necessary to reproduce the works published in his article, it should be noted that several of the pieces bear strong resemblance to examples which have been found at Jhewāri; at least two seated Buddhas in *bhūmisparśamudrā* are of the type seen in Fig. 262, a seated male Bodhisattva is similar to the seated Tārā in Fig. 260, and others also show relationship to documented Jhewāri pieces. Thus, whether a single atelier, such as one at Jhewāri, was responsible for the production of works found in the entire region, or whether multiple centers produced strongly related works, cannot be determined. The peculiar characteristics of the Chittagong style, however, may be examined by studying a number of sculptures from Jhewāri.

The hoard of metal images found at Jhewāri in 1927<sup>6</sup> consisted of sixty-one Buddhist sculptures, two small shrines and three fragments of images, some of which are inscribed, although none of these bears a date.<sup>7</sup> At present, most of the images are kept at the Indian

Museum, Calcutta. The majority are related to each other stylistically—their greatest differences seeming to be quality of craftsmanship along with slight chronological changes. A general resemblance to the metal sculptures which have been found at Nālandā may be seen in the Jhewāri examples although they are in fact highly distinctive works testifying to a strong local tradition.

Perhaps the dating of the images may best be accomplished by examining some of the smaller, more crude representations. A group of three seated Buddhas on adjacent thrones (Fig. 256) identifiable by their *mudrās* as Akṣobhya, Vairocana and Amitābha from left to right bears an almost startling resemblance to a seated Buddha from Nālandā<sup>8</sup> which probably dates from the mid-9th century. The figures share similarly compact, yet slender, bodies and smooth robes, prominent facial features and knobby hair. In addition, while the lotus petals vary in pointing upwards or downwards, their form is nearly identical. The Jhewāri piece would, therefore, seem to have been made about the same time and was obviously a product of a school closely related to that of Nālandā. A hint of one main difference between the Nālandā style and that which is found at Jhewāri may be seen in the faces. The Jhewāri Buddhas have smiles on their faces, an expression which appears almost frozen on a number of these images. This different facial expression (as well as facial type) will become more apparent as the discussion of Jhewāri idioms continues.

A number of other representations may be ascribed to the mid-9th century as well on the basis of their resemblance to the previous figures and also to sculptures from Nālandā. However, great variety is shown in the iconography of these images and in the assembly of the decorative forms which appear on them. Thus, a seated Buddha in *bhūmisparśamudrā* (Fig. 257) relates in his physical appearance to the previous Buddhas, but his throne is very unusual, except for the lotus petals which are an expected 9th century form. The distinctive features of the throne include the low height of the square back, combined with a large round halo. At Nālandā, the round halo was seen frequently behind the image but without the square part of the throne (Fig. 164). Also, the rim of flame is here bordered by an external rim, a feature not encountered in Bihar thus far. The individual flames curve in a snake-like fashion rather than a simple shape as at Nālandā. The umbrella and streamers on this and many other Jhewāri pieces are flat and compressed as opposed to those at Nālandā where a long rod frequently held up these elements.

Another unusual throne is also seen in a representation of a Buddha in *bhūmisparśamudrā* attended by two Bodhisattvas (Fig. 258). Probably also of a mid-9th century date because of the forms of the figures and lotus petals in particular, the image has a peculiar trilobate structure presumably enclosing the shapes of the halos serving as a back-drop. A rather awkward space occurs between this curve and the halo of the central Buddha as a result. Another unusual division of space takes place on the pedestal in which the central portion in front of the Buddha is slightly narrower than those in front of the Bodhisattvas—a reversal of the normal pattern.

Another Buddha image from Jhewāri (Fig. 259), again probably dating from the mid-9th century, is strikingly similar to works from the Comilla District in the treatment of the high throne (Figs. 253-254). Thus, the suggestion that certain stylistic characteristics gained currency throughout the southeastern regions is further reinforced. Even when ties to the traditions of Bihar, especially Nālandā, may be noted, the Jhewāri materials suggest

<sup>5</sup> N. N. Law, "Some Images and Traces," p. 332.

<sup>6</sup> *ASIAR*, 1927-28, p. 184.

<sup>7</sup> Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Indological Notes—Inscriptions of the Bronze Images from Jhewari in the Indian Museum" *JAIH* X (1976-77):110-14.

<sup>8</sup> Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 220.

that they were the products of local, southeastern Bengali workshops. A sculpture of the goddess Vasudhārā from Jhewāri (Fig. 260) demonstrates just this point, for while it bears clear associations with Nālandā works, such as Fig. 164, as may be seen in the proportions of the body, the general appearance of the facial features, the head-dresses and lotus petals, it is not likely that the Jhewāri piece would be mistaken for one from Nālandā. The treatment of the eyes and eyebrows is more accentuated and the eyes are closer together in the Jhewāri image, characteristics which are visible in other Jhewāri works. This image again falls within the stylistic parameters of the mid-9th century, by comparison to works of that time from Nālandā and Jhewāri in the treatment of the figure and lotus petals.

While retaining many of the features seen in Nālandā pieces, a standing Buddha (Fig. 261) shows characteristics quite common at Jhewāri. Namely, the representation of the body forms is accentuated by heavy lines occurring at the top of the thighs and across the abdomen below the navel, the navel is indicated by a cross, and the nipples are especially prominent. Also, the drapery which hangs over the arms of the figure tends to stand out from the body very stiffly, appearing almost as if it was made of some heavy, unbending material. Since the facial characteristics as well as the treatment of the throne elements are quite similar to those of the previous Buddha images, there is no reason other than the change in drapery and body accentuation to suggest a radical difference in date, although it is possible that the piece is slightly later than the others, ca. mid-to-late 9th century, as suggested by the increased stylization of the body.

The culmination of these tendencies towards stylization is seen in a number of images, rather larger in size than the others and quite clearly of a slightly different stylistic formulation, and perhaps a slightly later date, ca. 10th century. Although several more examples of this type exist, one image will suffice to demonstrate their style (Fig. 262). All of the images of this type which have been discovered thus far are identical in iconography, showing a Buddha seated upon a rounded cushion which is sometimes inscribed, and having the right hand in the *bhūmiṣpaśamudrā*. While minor variations are present, the figures are virtually the same. The Buddhas' bodies are slender and attenuated. A line across the hips (here clearly seen as the waistband of the Buddha's lower garment) and prominent nipples are present although the emphasis on the navel is less than in the preceding image. The drapery lines on these and most other Jhewāri images occur only at the edges of the garment. Folds or pleats as seen on images from other Buddhist sites are almost totally eliminated. The portion of the robe which falls over the Buddha's left shoulder is here neatly pleated and also has incised lines running in a horizontal direction. The faces of these Buddhas are somewhat related to Nālandā-type forms but they share a configuration which seems distinctive of metal images from this vicinity seen primarily in the shape of the nose, the arch of the brows, the half-closed eyelids and the delicately formed shape of the lips. An interesting aspect is the treatment of the hairline which appears as if the scalp and the face are two separate layers, a feature which almost seems to anticipate a later convention in Thai art. Since these images do not depart radically from the 9th century ones from the hoard, it is possible that only a short time elapsed before this style came into effect. Although the images have been dated as late as the 11th century by the authorities at the Indian Museum, I would suggest that, stylistically, they could be dated to the 10th century, assuming that this style represents a chronological change from the 9th century images.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Sircar assigns the paleography of the Jhewāri inscriptions to the mid-9th to mid-10th century. Sircar, "Bronze Images from Jhewari," p. 112.

This brief survey of the Jewāri metal images shows that the works exhibit a number of unique or unusual stylistic characteristics. A few images found in the hoard<sup>10</sup> seem related to some of the stray types which have also been recovered at Nālandā and Kurkihār, as discussed with the materials from those sites. However, since there are so few specimens in these apparently aberrant styles, it is not possible to determine their place of manufacture or to tie their production with any given site. The problem, however, is intriguing and may reflect some important historical contacts. Along with the unusual stylistic features of the Jhewāri works, several rare iconographic types are also present. These include a representation of Bhaiṣajyaguru (the Medicine Buddha), a standing Buddha in *dharmacakramudrā*, as well as several other yet unidentified *mudrās* being displayed by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Thus, it may be concluded that the extant Jhewāri materials are but a tantalizing sampling of what may have been an important and highly original artistic tradition of eastern Bengal. Further, it is evident that the Jhewāri finds are but one component of what must have been a vital and rich sculpture school in southeastern Bengal. The relationship of the Jhewāri pieces to others from the ancient Samatāṭa and Harikela regions and the distinctiveness of such works compared to other traditions of Bihar and Bengal metal casting suggest that these are not peripheral schools of art nor are they mere extensions of art producing centers located elsewhere in eastern India. Since early evidence of local metal casting exists in works like the dated Sarvāṇī from the Khadga dynasty, which was found at Deulbādī in the Comilla District (Fig. 26), it must be concluded that an independent metal working tradition took root prior to the ascendancy of the Pāla kings. Interestingly, the vitality of the metal tradition contrasts strikingly to the sparseness of that of stone carving in this region in the pre-Pāla and early Pāla periods. Possibly, a lack of local stone suitable for carving accounted for this to some extent, or there may be other, yet unknown, reasons why one medium was apparently so favored over the other.

#### NORTH BENGAL

In northern Bengal, several sites have yielded metal images from the periods of concern to this study. In contrast to the examples from southeastern Bengal, which seemed to share certain features, it is more difficult to find the common denominator of the northern Bengal materials. On the other hand, for the most part, it is easier to tie the northern Bengal metal images to the stone working styles, a phenomenon which was virtually impossible in the case of southeastern Bengal.

#### PĀHĀRPUR (Rajshahi District)

The size and architectural importance of the site of Pāhārpur contrasts sharply to the paucity of archaeological finds in terms of metal and stone sculptures. The metal pieces that have been discovered there are not only Buddhist, but Brahmanical and Jain too, causing further complications in the study of what is traditionally held to be a famous and prosperous Buddhist establishment. In addition, the few remains known are not of a particularly admirable artistic quality, leading to the conclusion that the few works which

<sup>10</sup> Huntington, *Origin and Development*, fig. 362.

have come to light are hardly typical of what might once have existed at this important site. Instead, perhaps these images are only those objects which had been overlooked by looters, or by monks who left the monastery in search of a place where they would not be persecuted. Or, perhaps, others await the archaeologist's spade.

Thus, a rather small and corroded representation of a standing Buddha (Fig. 263), and another of Umā-Maheśvara (Fig. 264), as well as a few other images, leave us little room for anything but speculation regarding what was presumably a long and developed art tradition at the site. The Buddha may date from the late 9th or 10th century, or approximately the time of Devapāla, on the basis of comparison to sculptures from Kurkihār (Fig. 176) in terms of the treatment of the lotus petals and the heavy lower lid of the eye, although in fact, very little in terms of stylistic characteristics can be determined. The Umā-Maheśvara probably dates from the 10th century as may be determined by the sharp and angular facial features and body postures compared to earlier forms, the cloud-like flame motif along the perimeter of the halo as well as the form of the lotus petals.<sup>11</sup>

These images, as well as the others which have been recovered, in fact tell us very little about what might have been a major school of Pāla-Sena period image making. The range in date between the images recovered is wide enough to suggest that the site hosted a long and presumably active development. Until more images are found, our knowledge of Pāhārpur must remain minimal, and hardly in keeping with historical and literary accounts of this renowned institution.

#### MAHĀSTHĀNGARH (Bogra District)

The existence of an impressive, as well as famous, image from Mahāsthāngarh (Fig. 265) has long suggested that this region probably nurtured a significant school of metal casting. This supposition was recently verified by the discovery of some eighty-six metal pieces at Bhāsu-Bihār,<sup>12</sup> most of which were awaiting chemical cleaning when I last heard about them and thus are not included here. These latter are overwhelmingly Buddhist in subject matter and show a range of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and other personifications. Interestingly, a number of them display the solid halo which was noted in southeastern Bengal, in contrast to the more popularly depicted rim-type halo of Bihar.<sup>13</sup>

The large statue referred to above (Fig. 265) shows a Bodhisattva who has been identified commonly as Mañjuśrī,<sup>14</sup> but recently, this supposition has been questioned.<sup>15</sup> Nearly one meter in height, the sculpture was found near a small mound, which may indicate an ancient temple site, in the Ātovālā section of the village of Saralpur,<sup>16</sup> near Mahāsthāngarh. It bears the remains of gilding on its surface, but is virtually unique in many respects. Since it lacks a halo, lotus petals and other features which aid in dating, its

<sup>11</sup> For a similar flame motif, see Huntington, *Origin and Development*, figs. 244-245; for the form of the lotus petals, see fig. 251. These three comparative sculptures are all from Kurkihār.

<sup>12</sup> Ahmed, "Recent Discoveries," pp. 16-18.

<sup>13</sup> For illustrations, see *ibid.*, pl. X, figs. 12-15.

<sup>14</sup> Marie-Thérèse de Mallman, *Étude iconographique sur Mañjuśrī*, Publications de l'École française d'extrême-orient, LV (Paris, 1964), p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> Asher, *Art of Eastern India*, p. 94.

<sup>16</sup> Prabhas Chandra Sen, *Mahasthan and Its Environs*, Varendra Research Society's Monographs, 2 (Rajshahi, 1929), pp. 10-11. (See also Varendra Research Society, *Annual Report of the Varendra Research Society* [Rajshahi], 1926-27, "Notes," p. 5; and 1928-29, p. 19.)

date is somewhat problematic to assess. It has been dated as early as the 5th century by some scholars,<sup>17</sup> but stylistically is more related to images of the 7th or 8th century, such as the Khaḍga Sarvvānī (Fig. 26). The figure distinctly relates to the Sārnāth tradition and may be compared to images from Sārnāth, as well as the Bodhisattva found at Nālandā but derived from the Sārnāth style (Fig. 11) in facial features, hair style, simplicity of garments and lack of jewelry. However, similar facial features appear on the Khaḍga Sarvvānī, the hair falling behind the ears in the two images also appears somewhat similar and Sarvvānī is also clothed simply and with a relative lack of adornments. Thus, a date of late 7th-early 8th century may be suggested.

From an iconographic point of view, one metal image from Mahāsthāngarh is intriguing since it shows a corpulent male figure, perhaps a Bodhisattva (Fig. 266). The rather worn condition of the sculpture makes it difficult to ascertain the original form of the facial features and even the flames around the *prabhāmaṇḍala*. However, the compactness of the image suggests that it is of the developed Pāla period style and may date from around the 9th century. A later date is unlikely judging from the still simple forms of the lotus petals. Nothing about the work seems distinctive of a regional or local school as stylistically similar pieces are known from other sites in Bihar and Bengal, suggesting that it may be a stray piece.

Another sculpture, again interesting because of its iconography, shows a seated male deity whose four arms are arranged in a very unusual manner, with one pair in *dhyānamudrā*, the other two resting upon his knees (Fig. 267). In contrast to the preceding sculpture, this work seems highly distinctive of Bengali art, as noticeable in the treatment of the throne and halo especially. The lotus halo set high above the head of the figure is reminiscent of the placement in the Umā-Maheśvara from Pāhārpur (Fig. 264), although the specific treatment differs. The developed form of the lotuses, being both a double row and having the incised outline, relates the work to the Umā-Maheśvara image from Pāhārpur and other works of that approximate time. However, the density and relative heaviness of the flames around the rim of the halo recall those of the dated Viṣṇu metal sculpture from Bengal of the reign of Devapāla (Fig. 32) and suggest that this image may have been made slightly earlier than the Pāhārpur Umā-Maheśvara, or around the 9th century.

Showing clear associations with the seated figure just discussed is an image of Viṣṇu with his two consorts from Mahāsthāngarh (Fig. 268). Indeed, in these two sculptures, some of the distinctive traits of the Mahāsthāngarh style might be in evidence. Each figure is set against a throne, which, while not identical in the two examples, on the whole is distinctive from examples popular in Bihar. For, while the lion-atop-elephant is encountered so frequently at the sides of thrones in the metal imagery of Bihar (Figs. 28-29, etc.), here the upright supports are not enhanced by such a motif. Another feature of the Viṣṇu image which may characterize one aspect of the Mahāsthāngarh style is the contrast between the smooth surfaces of parts of the work, such as the halo centers and the uprights of the architectural construct, and the ornamented, textured surfaces, such as the rims of the halos. Such an awareness of the smooth, flat surfaces does not seem to prevail in the metal imagery at other Bihar and Bengal sites, and it may some day be verified as a distinctive trait of the Mahāsthāngarh school. The Viṣṇu image may be dated ca. 9th century. The

<sup>17</sup> Prabhas C. Sen, "Mahasthan," p. 11.

two attendant females seem related in spirit and form to the types in the Khadga Sarvvāṇī, of the late 7th-early 8th century, yet the formulation of Viṣṇu's body and ornamentation seems even more developed than that of the dated Viṣṇu from Devapāla's reign (Fig. 32). The image still retains much of the softness in the treatment of body forms which prevailed in the 8th-9th centuries, and it is doubtful that it would have been made after that time. Thus, a 9th century date seems indicated for this work.

These few sculptures give only a slight suggestion of the artistic developments of Mahāsthāngarh. Yet, the apparent variety of iconographic forms and styles indicates that the tradition must have been rich. When the sculptures retrieved from Bhāsu-Bihār have been cleaned and are ready for study, it is certain that our meagre knowledge about this site will be increased.

#### RAJSHAHI AND MALDAH DISTRICTS

In spite of the recent discoveries of metal images from sites in northern Bengal, such as Pāhārpur and Mahāsthāngarh, the vast potential of recovering sculptures from the region seems barely touched. Other famous Buddhist monasteries are known to have existed in north Bengal, but as yet, these have not been located, let alone excavated. Some sites have been tentatively identified, such as the mound at Jagaddal,<sup>18</sup> which is believed to be the famous Jagaddala monastery founded by a Pāla ruler, perhaps Rāmapāla, in the late 11th or early 12th century.<sup>19</sup> Of the metal pieces which have been unearthed in northern Bengal, very few may be ascribed to the early Pāla period. A depiction of Viṣṇu, however, which was found at Kumārpur in the Rajshahi District in northern Bengal, indicates the existence of some scattered artistic activity at an early date (Fig. 269). Possibly dating from the early 8th century, as suggested by the rather squat body forms of the figures, the extensive use of the bead motif on the image (as opposed to flames and other later motifs), and the general simplicity of the work, the sculpture is somewhat crude. As in early sculptures from other sites, such as Nālandā, the facial features have a rather bulbous appearance. Viṣṇu's crown is of an early type, and the positioning of his four arms in a downward direction is a feature generally associated with pre-9th century Viṣṇu images.

Unfortunately, little remains of the northern Bengal metal-working tradition to bridge the gap between the time of an image like the Kumārpur Viṣṇu and sculptures of the later Pāla period, many of which are truly splendid productions by master craftsmen. Buddhist images apparently continued to be made, as evidenced by a very tiny depiction of a standing Bodhisattva (Fig. 270), and one of a seated Tārā (Fig. 271). The Bodhisattva was found at Mangalbari in the Rajshahi District and is both crude and worn so that it is difficult to assess its stylistic features. However, the very accentuated pose with the thrust hip of the figure and his high crown suggest a later Pāla period date. Further, the double lotus pedestal and bead motif around the base of the pedestal are similar to representations of the 12th century (Fig. 189), thus suggesting a date of that period. The figure of Tārā found at Pandua in the Maldah District is a much more handsome production, though still small. Again, the accentuated pose of the figure, along with the elaborate treatment of the lotus pedestal suggest a 12th century date. Another feature of this work indicating a later Pāla period date is the use of inlay of different colors of metal to enhance the work.

<sup>18</sup> Maitra, *Ancient Monuments*, pl. IV, 7. See also *ASIR, EC*, 1920-21, pp. 30-31.

<sup>19</sup> S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks*, p. 377.

This type of inlay is used, for example, to distinguish the eyes, *ūrṇā* and jewelry of a figure of Manasā which was found in northern Bengal although its find-spot is unrecorded (Fig. 272). Superficially, the image resembles the representations of Vasudhārā from Kurkihār (Figs. 45-46) which were inscribed with the date of the thirty-first or thirty-second year of Rājyapāla's reign, around the mid-10th century. Possibly, this is due to the use of inlay in all these images, as well as the practice of the drilling of the eyeballs, which adds a certain liveliness to the faces. However, the body proportions of Manasā, her round breasts with the necklaces falling across them, the accentuation of her seated pose and her narrow hips recall those features of the standing Tārā image from the 2nd or 3rd year of Rāmapāla's reign (Fig. 74), ca. last quarter of the 11th century. Further, the male seated on Manasā's lap bears some resemblance to the figure to Tārā's proper left. Manasā also sits atop a double row of lotus petals which are in a floriated and elaborate style. The high and complicated pedestal beneath her is another indication of a later Pāla period date, around the late 11th century. Effectively, the increase in the size of the platform serves to diminish the relative scale of the figure itself in relation to the overall proportions of the icon, serving to recall the similar trend in north Bengal stone sculptures of the 11th and 12th centuries. It is thus likely that this representation is a product of the late 11th century. Its high quality of craftsmanship and technical precision indicate that a well developed sculpture tradition must have existed, perhaps rivalling schools like Kurkihār, although little remains to document its existence.

The exquisite quality of late Pāla Bengali craftsmanship is further documented from northern Bengal in the three metal sculptures which were recently found at Mandoil in the Rajshahi District (Figs. 68, 273, 274). The image of Viṣṇu has already been discussed<sup>20</sup> with regard to its inscription which provides a date of the 4th year of Vīgrahapāla (III), ca. 3rd quarter of the 11th century. Although it has been suggested that the representations of Kalyāṇasundaramūrti and Tārā (Figs. 273, 274) are of a later date than the dated Viṣṇu,<sup>21</sup> there seems to be no reason to doubt that all three works were made at the same time and represent the products of a single workshop. The Kalyāṇasundaramūrti image is uninscribed although the Tārā bears a much damaged epigraph which has been read as *Saukumārā i kaya, Iyam dharma...* (This beautiful body, This religion...).<sup>22</sup> It is interesting to note that in this group, two of the images are Hindu, while one, the Tārā, is Buddhist, yet there is no discernible stylistic difference between them. While representations of Tārā and Viṣṇu are common in the art of Bihar and Bengal, Kalyāṇasundaramūrti is a most unusual subject; while depictions are known in stone, this is the only metal example that has come to my attention. It has been suggested, at least in the case of the Mandoil representation, that influence from southern India may account for the appearance of this subject in the art of Bengal.<sup>23</sup> The refined style seen in these images testifies that the same high quality of work found in northern Bengal stone sculptures occurs in the metal working tradition. As in the case of the stone carvings, the metal pieces bear considerable

<sup>20</sup> See pp. 64-5 above.

<sup>21</sup> Siddhanta, "Some Recently Acquired Sculptures," pp. 108-12. The author ascribes the Viṣṇu image to the reign of Vīgrahapāla II and assigns it a date in the 10th century, but he assigns the other two images dates in the 11th century.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

resemblance to examples from Aṅga and reassert the suggestion that the northern Bengal art traditions were strongly in concert with those of the Aṅga region.<sup>24</sup>

Another important group of metal images from northern Bengal is the hoard of five Viṣṇu sculptures which was found at Sahibgañj in the Rangpur District. The pieces were found by a farmer in an earthen pot covered by bricks on November 6, 1910, so, while it is assumed that they are works of northern Bengal, their original contexts are not known.<sup>25</sup> Of the five images, three were brought to the Indian Museum, Calcutta, where they are presently kept (Figs. 275, 276, 277) and two were left to be put into worship by the local Hindus,<sup>26</sup> although they do not seem to be at the site today. None of the sculptures bears an inscription; however, four of them, as exemplified by Figs. 275 and 276, are closely related to the Viṣṇu from Nimdighi, Rajshahi District in northern Bengal which is dated in the 23rd year of the reign of Mahipāla (I) in the first quarter of the 11th century (Fig. 60). Together, these sculptures must reflect what was probably a northern Bengal style idiom of about the early 11th century, as they all share a number of features, including the general treatment of the pedestals, lotus petals, outer rims of the *prabhāmaṇḍalas*, relative heights of the figures in relation to each other and their overall compositions. Although there are differences in the facial types, head-dresses and costumes, all are typically late Pāla period forms. The fifth image from Sahibgañj (Fig. 277) is more distinctive, and differs from any of the Bihar and Bengal images thus far described. The highly three-dimensional, sculpted effect of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* is unusual among surviving metal pieces from Bihar or Bengal, although in the context of the northern Bengal sculpture tradition, at least as manifested in stone, it should not be so surprising. Such cross-overs in style between stone and metal, in fact, are to be expected. The plasticity of the forms, the small size of the figures in relation to the other elements of the icon, the form of the two consorts attending Viṣṇu and the attenuated and pointed *prabhāmaṇḍala* are all indications of a 12th century date and point to some of the possible developments of north Bengal imagery of the 12th century. It might be noted that the flames of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* are rimmed by a metal band, a feature which occurs only rarely in Bihar and Bengal metal works.

#### THE DACCA AREA (South-Central Bengal)

Relatively few metal images from the vicinity of Dacca have come to light thus far, especially compared to the abundance of stone sculptures. However, the pieces which are known seem to demonstrate that this region was distinct from that of southeastern Bengal in terms of the metal casting schools.

One image from Sonarang, Vikramapura, Dacca District shows an actively posed goddess who has been identified as Vāgīśvarī, a form of Sarasvatī (Fig. 278).<sup>27</sup> Although Kramrisch has dated this work to the beginning of the 10th century,<sup>28</sup> it seems certain in light of evidence which has been presented in this study that the image dates from a later period, perhaps the 11th or 12th century. The wide shoulders, full bosom and broad face are characteristics that have been clearly defined in both stone and metal sculptures of the 12th century, although this image perhaps best compares to the Vajratārā from Bhagalpur

(Fig. 196). Here, the resemblance goes beyond the simple coincidence of female figures with multiple arms. This relationship is hardly surprising since we remember that Bhagalpur, a part of the ancient region of Aṅga, was an intermediate area between Magadha and Bengal and in many respects, images found there strongly resemble forms found in Bengal. In addition, a Vajratārā lotus *maṇḍala* quite similar to the Bhagalpur example, although in a much more damaged condition, is presently kept in the Dacca Museum but was found in the Faridpur District, not far from Dacca. These similarities thus reflect a probable relationship of style in these regions during the 11th-12th century, and perhaps active transportation of images or artists.

Another representation from Dacca District, although not from Vikramapura, is more difficult to place into an artistic context. A Buddha in *bhūmiśparśamudrā*, possibly Akṣobhya, sits upon a lotus seat which in turn is placed upon a high and architecturally complex pedestal (Fig. 279). It was found at Dhamrai, a village in the Dacca District which has yielded a number of Pāla-Sena period antiquities, although its ancient history is little known. The encrusted surface of the image precludes a detailed stylistic analysis of the figure although it appears to be solid and heavy and more akin to Pāla period images after the 10th century than those from an earlier date. Also, the double row of seemingly complicated lotus petals indicates a later date, perhaps 11th-12th century. To a certain extent, the complexity both horizontally and vertically of the pedestal recalls that found on Fig. 190 although the specific form is not the same. The importance of this icon to our study is mainly as another indication of the breadth and variety found in Bengal metal imagery, which is different from the forms found in Bihar and yet which is little known.

A few extraordinarily high quality metal images from the region around Dacca have also been found. Perhaps the most outstanding representation is an image made entirely of silver showing Viṣṇu and his consorts, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, which was found at Sonarang at ancient Vikramapura, Dacca (Fig. 280). Not only is this image impressive because of the material out of which it is made and its pristine condition, but its splendid quality of execution is worthy of mention. In style, this icon relates unquestionably to stone and metal images from both north and south Bengal from the 12th century although the technical achievement may be compared to that which occurred at the same time at sites like Kurkihār (Figs. 186-187). The reduction of the figures in relation to the size of the icon including the *prabhāmaṇḍala* and pedestal, the floriated flames around the perimeter of the *prabhāmaṇḍala*, the highly complicated form of the *kīrttimukha* at the top of the image and the elaborately bejewelled figures are but a few of the characteristics which suggest a 12th century attribution. The complex treatment of both the vertical and horizontal divisions of the pedestal and the floriated lotus petals support this assertion. If the cost of such an icon and the care which must have gone into its creation are any index of the active state of religion and patronage during the 12th century, it must be assumed that this period was fertile (rather than declining as is so frequently assumed) and that present knowledge is hardly in keeping with what probably existed. It is difficult to assess how commonly images were made in precious materials, such as gold or silver, since so few have survived. Clearly, the intrinsic value of the metal must have led to the melting down of images to some extent. It is likely that some of the finest Pāla-Sena period metal pieces were made of precious materials, since it follows that if a donor had sufficient funds to purchase the raw metal, payment for the highest quality of craftsmanship could also be provided.

<sup>24</sup> See pp. 179, 181-83 above.

<sup>25</sup> D. B. Spooner, "The Vishnu Images from Rangpur," *ASIAR*, 1911-12, pp. 152-58.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 157-58, pl. LXXI, figs. 4 and 5.

<sup>27</sup> Kramrisch, "Pala and Sena Sculpture," fig. 25.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*



## WESTERN BENGAL

## SAGARDIGHI (Murshidabad District)

Several metal images of the later Pāla period have been found at the village of Sagardighi in the Murshidabad District of western Bengal. Two of the images,<sup>29</sup> which are similar to some of the later Pāla period works from northern Bengal, such as those from Rangpur, will not be discussed here. However, two distinctive ones will be included.<sup>30</sup> A figure of a standing Viṣṇu (Fig. 281) may be dated to the beginning of the 11th century on the strength of the relationships between it and the image dated in the year 23 of the reign of Mahīpāla (Fig. 60). While this comparison is at first deceiving since the Mahīpāla piece has its complete *prabhāmaṇḍala* and the Sagardighi piece has only a fragment of one at the lower left, a detailed analysis bears out the similarities. For example, the lotus petals upon which the two Viṣṇus stand are virtually identical as are the rather hardened features of the faces (although the face and cheeks of the dated Viṣṇu are fuller). Both gods wear crowns of a similar, though not identical, configuration, and both have rather stiff, shapeless legs.

The second image to be discussed shows Viṣṇu again, but in an unusual posture since he is seated in *mahārājālīlā* pose (Fig. 282). Here, a rather convincing set of 12th century forms is present in the high and elaborate pedestal and the embellishment of the lotus petals. Thus, it is apparent that the pieces found at Sagardighi are not necessarily of the same period although a certain degree of continuity between them is evident in the representation of the halos as well as other details. Until others are found from this vicinity, it would be difficult to judge the full implications of these works.

## CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BENGAL SCHOOLS OF METAL SCULPTURE

Although many fewer metal sculptures survive than stone carvings from Bengal, an interesting pattern emerges in the distinctions between what might have been separate schools. For example, the metal pieces from southeastern Bengal are clearly the products of a highly original as well as rich sculptural tradition. While it is easy to detect the relationships of this schools to others, such as that of Nālandā, certain elements earmark the local trends. The use of the solid halo or *prabhāmaṇḍala*, for example, found so frequently in southeastern Bengal is not generally present in Nālandā images. In fact, while a few metal sculptures from Nālandā with this feature are known, it is possible that they were brought to the site from another place of manufacture.

The development of metal imagery in other parts of Bengal remains enigmatic. Patterns of production and stylistic and iconographic variations remain to a large extent unknown, although unquestionably, active ateliers must have existed. Hopefully, future discoveries will augment our knowledge of what must have been one of the most prolific and creative schools of Indian metal casting.

<sup>29</sup> For example, *EISMS*, pl. XXXVIII, b.

<sup>30</sup> For a summary on the site, see S. R. Das, *Archaeological Discoveries*, pp. 18-20.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study has dealt with stylistic trends in the sculpture which was produced in Bihar and Bengal from the pre-Pāla period to the end of the Pāla and Sena periods. By studying style, it has been possible to demonstrate chronological developments, regional and local trends, as well as some sectarian preferences. The overall development from a relatively simplified formulation of the human figure and the stele slab to a highly complicated representation during the course of the four or five hundred years of evolution probably went hand in hand with a technological development in both stone working and metal casting whereby the artists became more certain of their media and did not hesitate to embellish and elaborate upon various forms. However, the complication of decoration also arose from increasing embellishments within the Buddhist and Brahmanical religions.

Aside from the definition of local and regional trends within the broad geographical limits of Bihar and Bengal, perhaps the two most significant factors revealed by this study are the general shift in artistic centers from the western to the eastern portion of this area as time progressed and the gradual supplanting of the Buddhist religion by Brahmanical faiths as the region of Bengal came more into prominence. With these developments as a guide, it will now be possible to study these religious developments in greater detail than had been possible before. Since at present, numerous questions remain unanswered, such as why Vaiṣṇavism rose to such prominence in the 11th and 12th centuries, it is hoped that studies on this subject will be undertaken.

The art of the Pāla and Sena periods has provided us with a rare occurrence in Indian art and history. A four hundred year development having a clear beginning, middle and end and directly paralleling the rise and fall (although not the intermittent misfortunes) of a political dynast offers a veritable microcosm for study. While it has been shown that the ruling families of the Pālas, Senas and even the less powerful Candras and Varmans did not necessarily patronize the art so that it would be considered a dynastic art tradition, the relative stability and continuity they provided in this region allowed the development of an insular, although not isolated, tradition. Patronage in the form of encouragement or meritorious works as exemplified by the apparently royal foundations of Pāhārpur, Vikramaśīla, Nālandā and other religious establishments are not to be denied, although it is evident that an extremely active lay community also played a vital role in the maintenance of the Pāla and Sena period traditions.

Although this microcosmic art tradition in Bihar and Bengal did not have particularly great influence in other regions of India, aside from adjacent areas such as Assam, Orissa to some extent, and portions of central India, its importance to art developments in other regions of Asia was considerable. China, Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Java and other areas of Southeast Asia each owes a debt to the artistic developments which occurred primarily in the Buddhist establishments of Bihar and Bengal. With the definition of the trends at individual monasteries and sites that has been a purpose of this study, perhaps it will now be possible to point to more specific sources within India for other artistic developments.

Roughly equivalent to the area of Spain, or double the combined areas of England and Scotland, the Bihar and Bengal regions are culturally as rich as many of the world's major recognized civilizations. Indeed, were these regions not overshadowed by being part of the much larger South Asian cultural phenomenon, the religious and artistic traditions which developed there would have gained more notice and would have classified them among the richest in the world. Even among the South Asian traditions, the recognition of Bihar and Bengal has been somewhat haphazard. The more than six thousand extant stone and metal sculptures from the region, for example, have received much less attention from the scholarly community than have many-times smaller schools of art. Even single sites like Sārnāth and Mathurā have greatly overshadowed Nālandā, Vikramapura and other art-producing sites in the eastern regions of the subcontinent. Such attention has been long overdue, and it is hoped that the present volume helps to stimulate further scholarly activity which will help illuminate not only one of the most splendid artistic developments in South Asia, but one which must be classed among some of the most impressive in the world.

## APPENDIX OF INSCRIBED DATED SCULPTURES

### INTRODUCTION

In this appendix, I have attempted to include every sculpture which is inscribed and dated and has relevance to the geographic area and time period of concern to this study whether or not I have been able to trace the work and provide an illustration of it. My purpose was not to supply every published version of every inscription, but rather to provide the major interpretations.

Unless indicated, every transcription and translation of an inscription is a direct quote from the source cited. Parentheses around a translation indicate that this is a summary, not a direct translation of an inscription, but still a quote from the source. Brackets indicate my own paraphrasing of a translation. I have not given my own Romanized transliteration of an inscription if the author in question did not do so even when a Devanāgarī text was provided since I did not want to introduce any possible errors or my own interpretations. Occasionally, I have changed the form of line numbers in a transliteration and have corrected clear and obvious typing errors, such as the omission of a diacritical in the transliteration, which was provided, however, in the translation. I have generally indicated when the opening "*siddham*" of an inscription is provided by symbol if this was noted by the various authors cited. For consistency, all inscriptions are given in italics, although they do not always appear this way in the original sources.

Remarks given after the inscription are always mine.

### MISCELLANEOUS EARLY INSCRIPTIONS

1. *Subject*: Neminātha  
*Provenance*: Rājgir, Patna District, Bihar  
*Material*: stone  
*Date*: reign of Candragupta II?  
*Inscription*:  
*[ma]harājā[ti]rā[ja] śrī-Chandra*  
*Translation*:  
 Not given.  
*Reference*: Chanda, "Jaina Remains," p. 125, pl. LVIIb.
2. *Subject*: Buddha (Bodhisattva according to inscription) (Fig. 5)  
*Provenance*: Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar  
*Material*: stone  
*Date*: the year 64  
*Inscription*:
  1. *Mahārājasya Trikamalasya sa 60 4 gri 3 di 5 [eta] sya purvāya bhikshu Vinayadharasya. viharasya sadivihari Vīna [yadhara] [bhikshu] ...*

2. *mātyadharavihāra svakena samartho srame [na] kā Bodhisatva paṭimā Siharatha pratisthāpayati upāsikaye artha-dharmasahāyitīye Dhanna ... taka ... ye savva*  
 3. ... [sa] hāyatā dharmakathikena Dha. na II imena kuśalamūlenā mātāpitunam pūjāye bhavatu upadha [ya] ... jāye ... dha ... dhi

## Translation:

[A man who was a teacher of the *vinaya* and who was the companion of another monk who was also a teacher of the *vinaya* caused one Simharatha to dedicate this image of the Bodhisattva in the reign of Mahārāja Trikamala in the year 64, on the 5th day of the 3rd summer month. The names of two persons are given, a female lay disciple and an expounder of the holy text who evidently helped the donor Simharatha.]

Reference: Chanda, "Mathura School," p. 169.

## 3. Subject: Sūrya

Provenance: Shāhpur, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: year 55 or 88 or 66

## Inscription:

*Aum-Samvat 55 Mārgge Sudi 1; asyin—  
 Divasa Māsa Samvatsarānda purvayam  
 Sri Aditya Sena Deva rājye (vala) Sri Mahāgrahāra  
 Sādhu, valādhikṛita Saladakshena Dedharmayam, &c.*

## Translation:

In the year 55, on the 1st of Mārgga Sudi, on that said day, month and year, during the reign of Aditya Sevna (sic) Deva, this statue was presented to the great Agrahāra by Parikshita (?) for the benefit of his father and mother, and the increase of his own merit.

Reference: Cunningham, ASR, XV, p. 12.

Remarks: Cunningham read the date as the year 55 but noted that Pandit Bhagwân Lâl Indrajî read it as 88.

-OR-

Date: year 66 (Harṣa era?, i.e. 672-3 A.D.)

## Inscription:

1. ... kh . l . dh . g ... chandra-kshiti-kālam yāvat = p[r]atipāditam [||\*]
2. Ōm Samvat 60 6 Mārgga śu di 7 (?) asyân = divasa-māsa-samvatsar-ānupūrvyām śrī-Āditya sēna-
3. [dēva]-rāj[y]ē Nā(?)landa(?)-mah-āgrahārē sād[h]un]ā va(ba)lādhikṛita-Sālapakshēna dē[ya\*]- dharmmô = yam pratishṭhitam(h)
4. [mātāpitrôr = â]tmanaś = cha puṇy-ābhivṛiddhayê [||\*]

## Translation:

..... has been granted, to endure for the same time with .... and the moon and the earth.

(Line 2.)—Ōm! The year 60 (and) 6; (the month) Mārga; the bright fortnight; the day 7 (?),—on this (lunar day), (specified) as above by the day and month and year,

—in the reign of the illustrious Ādityasēnadēva, this appropriate religious gift has been installed by the virtuous Sālapaksha, the *Balādhikṛita*, in the great *agrahāra* of Nālanda (?), for the purpose of increasing the religious merit of (his) parents and of himself.

Reference: Fleet, *Inscriptions*, p. 210.

Remarks: Hirananda Sastri (*Nalanda and its Epigraphical Material*, pp. 82-83) gives a virtually identical version of the inscription. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1393.

## KHAḌGA DYNASTY

## 4. Subject: Sarvvānī (Fig. 26)

Provenance: Deulbāḍī, Comilla District, Bengal

Material: metal

Date: reign of Devakhaḍga

## Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

## Translation:

May success attend! May welfare accrue! There was an overlord of kings, Khaḍgōdyama by name. His son (became known) on earth (as) Jāta-Khaḍga. His powerful and benevolent son Dēva-Khaḍga was (like) a sword, a conqueror of all foes. Prabhāvatī, the queen-consort of this king, out of reverence for Śarvvānī, covered her image with gold.

Reference: Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions," p. 359.

## PĀLA DYNASTY

## 5. Subject: Lintel with representations of Sūrya, Lakulīśa and Viṣṇu (Fig. 27)

Provenance: Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: Stone

Date: the year 26 of Dharmapāla

## Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

## Translation:

For endless virtue, and for the good of the inhabitants of *Mahābodhi*, an image of the four-mouthed Mahādeva was consecrated by Saka, the son of the noble sculptor Sāyanabhara (?) A tank, holy as the river, born of the feet of Vishnu, was also excavated by him at a cost of three thousand drammas, in the 26th year of the great king Dharmapāla, on the 5th of the wane [of Bhadra] on the day of the son of the lord of light (Saturday).

Reference: R. Mitra, "Transcripts and Translations," p. 80.

Also quoted in Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, p. 64. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1609.

-OR-

## Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

In the pleasant Campaśāyatana, (Campaśa temple?) a four-faced Mahādeva was consecrated by the son of the sculptor Ujjvala, Keśava by name, for the (spiritual) benefit of the chief Mallas dwelling at Mahābodhi.

A very deep tank, sacred as the Ganges (born of the feet of Viṣṇu [sic]) was also excavated by him at a cost of three thousand *drammas*. In the 26th year of the reign of Dharmapāla, the day of the son of the creator of light (Saturday), the 5th day of the waning moon of Bhādra.

Reference: Chakravarti, "Pāla Inscriptions," p. 102.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

V.1-2: In the beautiful place of worship entitled Campaśa (or Campeśa), the four-faced Lord Śiva has been established for the welfare of greatest warriors (superior monks,) residing in Mahābodhi, (as also of graduates and of all persons) by Keśaba, the son of sculptor Ujjala.

V.3: For the benefit of noble-souled persons, a deep lake, resembling the Ganges in purity has, also, been excavated by him at a cost of three thousand *Dramma* (coins).

V.4: (This has been done) on the fifth day of the dark fortnight, (which was a) Saturday in the 26th year of kingdom of Dharmapāla, the ruler of the earth.

Reference: Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 112-13.

6. *Subject:* image (now lost) of god Madhuśrēṇika?

*Provenance:* Valgūdar, Monghyr District, Bihar

*Material:* ?

*Date:* reign of Dharmapāla

*Inscription:*

1. Siddham [\*] śrī-Dharmmapālādēva-rājyē Kṛimil-ādhisṭhānē Madhuśrēṇika[h]
2. Sālō-dharmmapatnī-Ajhukēna dēva-dharmmō = yaṁ kārīṭah ||

*Translation:*

Let there be success! (*The god*) Madhuśrēṇika (*is installed*) at the city of Kṛimilā during the reign of the illustrious Dharmmapālādēva; this meritorious gift (*i.e.* the image) is caused to be made by Ajhuka who is the wife of Sālō.

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," pp. 144-45.

Remarks: Curiously, the name Ajhuka also appears in P.L. Gupta's *Patna Museum Catalogue* transliteration (pp. 152-53) of the inscription in Appendix, no. 10.

7. *Subject:* Pañcika (Fig. 28)

*Provenance:* Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar

*Material:* metal

*Date:* the year 3 of Devapāla

*Inscription:*

1. Om śrī-Dēvapāla-rājyē samvat 3 Rājagrī(gri)ha-vi-
2. sa(sha)yē Purika-grāma-nivāsinaḥ Kalachuri-antakē
3. ka(?) patnī Vikhākaya [śēha]janni(janāni?) śrī-Nālandāyam pra-
4. tipāditaḥ

*Translation:*

Om. The third regnal year of the illustrious Dēvapāla. Vikhākā, (Viśākhā?) the sole wife of the 'destroyer of the Kalachuris'? The resident of the village of Purika in the district of Rājagrīha together with the people (?) set up at the famous Nālandā.

Reference: Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and its Epigraphical Material*, p. 87.

8. *Subject:* Hārītī (Fig. 29)

*Provenance:* Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar

*Material:* metal

*Date:* reign of Devapāla

*Inscription:*

1. [Om] śrī-Dēvapālādēva-rājyē
2. Rājagrīha-vishayē śrī-Nā-
3. landā-mahāpaṭalē(a)-vāstavya-kumhāra-Vedēma (?) pū(u)ttra-
4. Gōtuka (?) pū(u)ttra-Ujakadēśūka-kumhāri-kumhāra-śrī-
5. śrī Dēvapratipālitaṁ itiḥ(ti)

*Translation:*

[Name of the donor is not clear nor are the names of his father and grandfather. "Kumhāra" and "Kumhārī" refer to prince and princess?]

Reference: Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and its Epigraphical Material*, p. 88, pl. XI f.

9. *Subject:* Balarāma (Fig. 30)

*Provenance:* Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar

*Material:* metal

*Date:* reign of Devapāla?

*Inscription:*

1. Siddham (by symbol). śrī-Nālandāya śrī- Dēvapālādēva-haṭṭē
2. Malapōrasya Śōujjēkasya vadū(dhū?)-Nisīṅha (?) -
3. kāya dēva dharmmaya pratipādītāḥ ||

*Translation:*

(The inscription records the dedication of the image at Nālandā in the Dēvapāla-dēva-haṭṭa, or 'the mart of Dēvapālādēva,' by Nisīṅha(?)kā, the wife (?) of Śōujjēka.)

Reference: Amalananda Ghosh, "A Bronze Image Inscription from Nalanda," *EI* XXV (July 1940): 334-335.

Remarks: Ghosh feels that a *haṭṭa* may have been founded at Nālandā by Devapāla or that one was named after him. He says that the paleography is such that it may well be an image belonging to the regnal period of Devapāla. Apparently, the reading of the word *haṭṭa* is not really clear (see Sastri reading below).

*Reference:* P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 63-64. [The translation in the Patna Museum Catalogue is virtually identical to that given in the first publication of the inscription (S.N. Majumdar, "Hilsa Statue Inscription," pp. 34-35.) A few differences in punctuation, sentencing and arrangement of lines (of the translation)



occur but I did not feel it was necessary to include both translations because of their similarity. The *Patna Museum Catalogue* version was used because Romanized transliteration of the inscription was also given in that source.]

*Remarks:* The date was accepted as the year 25, not 35, by R.C. Majumdar ("Some Dates," p. 215) who follows S.N. Chakravarti ("Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390). See also D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1612. In a letter to me dated 12 February 1981, Dr. D.C. Sircar confirms the year 25 reading.

13. *Subject:* Buddha's Descent from Trayastriṃśa (Fig. 34)

*Provenance:* Uddanḍapura (Bihār Sharīf), Patna District, Bihar

*Material:* stone

*Date:* the year 3 or 2 of Śūrapāla (I)

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

In the second year of the reign of Mahārājādhirāja Śūrapāla, the 11th day of the dark fortnight of Āṣāḍha. In this year, month and day fortunate Uddanḍa Cūḍa had the stone image of the Lord placed in a caitya which he himself caused to be made, by the elder Pūrṇadāsa who was in the Vihāra there, who was the oldest person in the Pāḍikramaṇa Vihāra, and who was possessed of a pure sight. Whatever merit ...

*Reference:* Chakravartti, "Pāla Inscriptions," p. 108.

*Remarks:* For the issue of the reading of the year 2 versus the year 3, see S.N. Chakravarti, "Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1615.

14. *Subject:* Buddha Taming Nālāgiri (Fig. 35)

*Provenance:* Uddanḍapura (Bihār Sharīf), Patna District, Bihar

*Material:* stone

*Date:* the year 3 or 2 of Śūrapāla (I)

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

Identical to that of number 13 above.

*Reference:* Chakravartti, "Pāla Inscriptions," p. 108.

*Remarks:* Chakravartti notes that although the inscriptions on the two sculptures (Appendix, nos. 13 and 14) are identical, they are written differently due to the placement of ornamentation on the pedestals. For the issue of the reading of the year 2 versus the year 3, see S.N. Chakravarti, "Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1615.

15. *Subject:* *Dvādaśāditya* (Twelve *Ādityas*) (Fig. 36)

*Provenance:* Rājāunā or Valgūdar, Monghyr District, Bihar

*Material:* stone

*Date:* the year 5 of Śūrapāla (I)

*Inscription:*

*Om Samvat 5 Śrī-Śūrapāladeva-ra(rā)jya(jye) Kimilā-vāstava(vya)-Vani(ṇi)k-Śrīdhara-suta-Ranokena A(Ā)ditya(tyā)da(dvā)dasya(śa) pratithā(ṣṭhā)pitah(tāh) (||)*

*Translation:*

The twelve Ādityas were set up by Ranoka, son of the merchant Śrīdhara, a resident of Kimilā (Krimilā), during the fifth year of the reign of the illustrious Śūrapāla-deva.

*Reference:* P. Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions," pp. 107-108.

16. *Subject:* Unknown (Nālandā excavation no. SIA 231a and 231b)

*Provenance:* Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar

*Material:* Unknown

*Date:* reign of Śūrapāla (I)

*Inscription:*

1. [*Siddham*, expressed by symbol.] *Śrī-Śūrap[ā] ... Śrī-Nālandāya Talahaṭṭake Gaudūvākuṭṭa-patni-*

2. *Kalas[u]ka-dedharmmo = yaṃ kṛtaḥ*

*Translation:*

Let there be success! This meritorious gift is caused to be made by Kālaśukā, wife of Gaudūvā Kuṭṭa, at Talahaṭṭaka in the illustrious Nālandā in the year ... during the reign of the illustrious Śūrapāladeva.

*Reference:* D. C. Sircar, "Notes and Queries," pp. 301-2.

*Remarks:* Sircar notes that the inscription had been edited by Hirananda Sastri (*Nalanda and its Epigraphical Material*, p. 113) but that Sastri had failed to associate the damaged name with the Pāla king Śūrapāla.

16a. *Subject:* Viṣṇu

*Provenance:* perhaps Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

*Material:* metal

*Date:* the year 12 of Śūrapāla (I)

*Inscription:*

*Deya-dharmmo = ya śrī-Śūrapāla-rājye sa[mva]t 12*

*pīśadāpaṇaka-mahāvihāre thīsavā chārmakāsa-Tiyāshachasa*

*Kapilākatasya p[utra] Man[u]kena kāch[i]-taṃ.*

[Corrected text:]

*Deya-dharmmo = 'yaṃ śrī-Śūrapāla-rājye samvat 12 śrīmad-Āpaṇaka-mahāvihāre Thīsavāḥ chārmakāsa-Tiyāshachasya (|\*) Kapilā katasya putra Manukena kārītam (|\*)*

*Translation:*

This is the religious gift of the cobbler Tiyāshache of Thīsavī, at the illustrious Āpaṇaka-mahāvihāra, during year 12 in the reign of the fortunate Śūrapāla. [It is] made by Manuka, son of Kapitākata.

*Reference:* D. C. Sircar, personal letter of May 11, 1982. I am grateful to Dr. Sircar for supplying me with the transliterations and translation above.

*Remarks:* This sculpture is in the Gayā Museum, Museum # 76.1. See section added as a late note to Chapter 3 of this manuscript while in press (discussion of works from reign of Śūrapāla I).

17. *Subject:* Miracle of Śrāvastī (Fig. 37)*Provenance:* Rohoi, Patna District, Bihar*Material:* stone*Date:* the year 12 or 13 of Vighrahapāla (I)*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

Year of the reign of Srimad Vighrahapala four [2] Maggasirsha, 19th day. This is a religious gift of the son of Dehabú, a goldsmith.

*Reference:* Broadley, "Buddhistic Remains," p. 297. Broadley notes that this reading was done by Bhandarkar.

*Remarks:* Broadley gives the inscription on p. 297 but discusses the sculpture on p. 287; apparently, he mis-matched the piece and inscription.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

On the 15th of the month of Mārgga (November-December), in the Samvat year 12 of the reign of Śrīmat Vighrahapāla Deva, (the rest illegible).

*Reference:* Broadley, "Buddhistic Remains," p. 297. Broadley notes that this reading was done by Rajendralala Mitra.

-OR-

*Inscription:*1. *Śrī mad Vighraha Pāla Deva rājye Samvat 12 Mārga, dine 18*2. *Deya Dharmmayam**Translation:*

In the reign of the fortunate Vighraha Pāla Deva, the 12th year, the 18th day of Mārgga.

*Reference:* Cunningham, ASR, III, p. 121.

-OR-

*Inscription:*1. *Śrī-mad-Vighrahapāla-deva-rājya samvat 13 mārgga dine 14*2. *Deya[dha]rmmoyam suvarṇnakāra Dehekasya Sāhe sutasya ||**Translation:*

The year 13, the 14th day of Mārggaśirṣa, of the reign of the illustrious Vighrahapā-ladeva. The religious gift of the goldsmith Deheka, son of Sāhe.

*Reference:* R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 112; rpt. p. 72.

*Remarks:* Banerji believed the inscription, and hence the image, belonged to the reign of Vighrahapāla III. Cunningham's reading of the year 12 was corroborated by S.N. Chakravarti, "Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390, in preference over the year 13 reading.

18. *Subject:* on piece of stone, possibly originally a pedestal of an image?*Provenance:* Bihar?*Material:* stone*Date:* the year 9 of Nārāyaṇapāla*Inscription:*1. *Om Samvat 9 Vaiśākha Śudi 5 Paramēśvara-Śrī-Nārāyaṇapāladeva-rājye Andhra-vaiṣayika Śākya-bhikṣu-sthavira-Dharmmamitrasya*2. *yad = atra puṇyam tad = bhavatu-ācāry = opādhyāya-mātā-pitr-pūrvvaṅgamam kṛtvā saka-la-satva-rāṣer = anuttara-jñāna-prāptaya iti ||**Translation:*

(It records the erection of an image in the ninth year of the king Nārāyaṇapāla, in the month of Vaiśākha, by a Buddhist Elder, named Dharmmamitra, an inhabitant of the Andhra country.)

*Reference:* R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 62; rpt. p. 22. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1617.

19. *Subject:* Pārvaṭī with Kārttikeya (Fig. 43)*Provenance:* Uddāṇḍapura (Bihār Sharīf), Patna District, Bihar*Material:* metal*Date:* the year 54 of Nārāyaṇapāla*Inscription:*

*Om Deya-dha[rmmey]am Śrī-Nārāyaṇapāla-deva-rājye Samvat 54, Śrī-Uddāṇḍapura-vāstavya Rāṇaka Uchaputra Thārukasya.*

*Translation:*

The pious gift of Thāruka son of the Rāṇaka Ucha (Utsa), (dedicated) in the year 54 of the reign of the illustrious Nārāyaṇapāladeva.

*Reference:* R.D. Banerji, "Pratīhāra Occupation," p. 110.

-OR-

*Inscription:* not published*Translation:*

(Records a benefaction of Rāṇaka Thāruka, son of Ucha and resident of Uddāṇḍapura.)

*Reference:* D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1619.

20. *Subject:* Pedestal of an image showing nāgas (Fig. 44)*Provenance:* Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar*Material:* metal*Date:* the year 28 of Rājyapāla*Inscription:*1. *Svasti śrīmat-Kāñcīm = alarṅkurvan = nasti grāmaḥ satām = mataḥ (I\*) Narasimha-chaturvedī-maṅgala-ākhyo mahīyasām || dvijānām-ālayo ramyo Veda-vedāṅga-*2. *vedinā (m\*) (I\*) tatra vipra-ānvaye śuddhe labdha-janmā guṇānvitah || yo Vairochana-simhasya sthavirasya guṇodadheḥ || Prajñāsimha iti khyāta (h\*) śishyo = bhūd = guṇinām =*

3. mataḥ|| śo (so) = 'kārayad = idam vimv (mb) am Saugatam ghaṭa (?) n-oj (j\*) vala (m\*) (I\*) Śuddharāti (?) mayam bhaktyā nyāyāni mārga (m\*). samāśritaḥ|| anena puṇyen = ācāry-opādhyāya-sahitam
4. jagata (t) (I\*) mātā-pitri-samāyukta (m\*) saugatam padamā— = pnuyāta (t)|| Śrī-Rājyapāla-nāmnī kṣiti-bhṛiti bhuvam = avati kīrttir = atimahatī| abde = 'pta (shṭa) vimśatime kṛitā (si) ta-dinā (e) pta (shṭa) vaiśākhe||.

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image by one who was born in a village in Kāñcī bearing the auspicious name Narasimha-chaturvedin in a family of Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and who later on became a disciple, Prajñāsīmha by name, of the *sthavira* Vairocana Simha. The inscription contains the usual pious wish of transferring the merit to the teachers, parents and all the living creatures, and goes on to say that ... this great deed viz., the erection of the image was done in the 28th year of king Rājyapāla on the 8th day of the bright Vaiśākha.)

Reference: Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," pp. 246-47.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. Siddham (by symbol) śrīmat-Kāñchīm = alamkurvann = asti grāmaḥ satām = mataḥ (I\*) Narasimha-chaturvedi maṅgal-ākhyo mahāyasām dvijānām = ālayo ramyo Veda-Vedāṅga.
2. vedinā[m\*] [I\*] tatra vipr-ātva(nva)yeśuddhe lavdha(bdha)-janmā guṇ-ānvitah yo Vairochanasimhasya sthavarasya guṇā(no)daddeḥ Prajñāsīmha iti khyāta[h] śishyo = bhūd = guṇinā.
3. m = mataḥ śo(so) = kārayad = idam vimvam(mbam) Saugatam ghaṭan-oj[j\*] vala[m\*] (I\*) śuddha-rā(rī)ti-mayam bhaktyā nyāyāni mā[r]ga[m\*] samāśritaḥ anena puṇyen-ācāry-opādhyāya-sahita[m\*].
4. Jagata(gat)(\*)mātā-pitri-samāyukta[m\*] Saugatam padam = āpnuyāt śrī-Rāj[y\*]apāla-nāmnī kṣiti-bhṛiti bhuvam = avati kīrttir = atimahatī avdi(abde) = pta(shṭa) vimśati[ta\*]me kṛitā śi(śi)ta-dinā(e) = pta(shṭau) Vaiśākhe.

Translation:

(Records the gift of the metal image by one who was born in a village in Kāñchī bearing the name Narasimha chaturvedi-maṅgala in a family of Brāhmaṇas versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and who later on became a disciple of the *sthavira* Vairochanasimha and came to be known as prajñāsīmha. The inscription contains the usual pious wish to transferring the merit to the teachers, parents and all living creatures and goes to say that ... "this great deed." viz. the erection of the image, was done in the 28th year of King Rājyapāla, on the 8th day of the bright half of Vaiśākha.)

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 155.

21. Subject: Vasudhārā (Fig. 45)

Provenance: Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 31 or 32 of Rājyapāla

Inscription:

Svasti Śrī-Rājyapāla-deva-rāje samvacchare 32 śrīmad = Āpaṇaka = mahāvihāre vāstavya-Gopālahino (?) bhārya (ā) Gaukāyā devadharma ... horāsthapati-pātitaṁ.

Translation:

[Not given. The author refers the reader to the inscription on the second similar piece, stating that the "contents of the inscription are the same ... except that the name of the wife here is Gaukā." See the Appendix, no. 22.]

Reference: Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," p. 248.

-OR-

Inscription:

Siddham (by symbol) śrī-Rājyapāladeva-rāj[y\*]e samvachhara (samvatsare) 32 śrīmad-Āpaṇaka-mahāvihāre(a-)vāstavya-Gopālahino-bhārya(ryā)-Gaukāyā deva-dharmam ... horā-śṭha(stha)pati-pātitaṁ.

Translation:

Not given. The author refers the reader to the inscription on the second similar piece, stating that "the contents of the inscription are the same ... except that the name of the wife here is Gauka." See the Appendix, no. 22.

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 150.

Remarks: In the text of the inscription as given in the *Patna Museum Catalogue*, the year 32 is provided while the year 31 is given in the translation. Since the reading of the year 31 versus the year 32 in the case of the Umā-Maheśvara sculpture below (Appendix, no. 23) is controversial in light of the two translations, I was not sure what was intended here and thus left the dates of the images open to question as the year 31 or 32. Note that although this inscription is very close to that of Appendix no. 22 below, there are differences in the transliterations. These may be due to mistakes in the publication or actual differences in the inscriptions. For example, the name of monastery, Āpaṇaka, is variously spelled.

22. Subject: Vasudhārā (Fig. 46)

Provenance: Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 31 or 32 of Rājyapāla

Inscription:

Svasti Śrī-Rājyapāla deva-rāje samvacchare 32 Śrīmad = Āpaṇaka-mahā-vima hāre Gopālahino (?) bhārya (ā) Vātu (?) kāya (āḥ) devadharma kṛitaṁ Śopālahorā shṭha (stha) pati-pātitaṁ. Vasudhā.

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image by Vā (tu) kā the wife of Gopālahino (?) in the Āpaṇaka monastery in the 32nd year of king Rājyapāla. The image was probably cast by the architect (?) Śopālahorā, a curious name though there is no doubt about the reading.)

Reference: Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," pp. 247-48.

-OR-

Inscription:

Siddham (by symbol) śrī-Rājyapāladeva-rāj[y\*]e Samvachhara (samvatsare) 32. śrīmad-

*āpāṇaka-mahā-vimahāre(a-)vastavya-Gopālahino-bhārya(ryā)-Vāṭukāyā devadharma kṛitam*  
*Gopālahorā-shṭha(stha) patipātitaṁ-*

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image by Vāṭukā, the wife of Gopāla-Hino, in the Āpāṇaka monastery in the 31st year of king Rājyapāla. The image was probably cast by the architect Gopālahorā; a curious name, though there is no doubt about the reading.)

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 149-50.

Remarks: See Remarks for Appendix, no. 21 above. Also note that the letter *ma* in *vimahāre* in this inscription has scratches over it to indicate a correction.

23. Subject: Umā-Maheśvara (Fig. 47)

Provenance: Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 31 or 32 of Rājyapāla

Inscription:

*Śrī-Rājyapāla-deva-rāje samvachhare 31 śrīmad = Āpāṇaka-mahāvihāre vastāvyā-Mahiarubhārya(ā)-Mūlakāyā devadharma kṛitaṁ. Gopāla.*

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image by Mūlakā, the wife of Mahiaru, a resident of the Āpāṇaka monastery, in the 31st year of king Rājyapāla. The word Gopāla appearing at the end may represent the name of the sculptor.)

Reference: Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," p. 250.

-OR-

Inscription:

*Siddham (by symbol) śrī-Rājyapāladeva-rāj[ya]\*Je samvachhare (Samvatsare) 32 śrīmad = Āpā(Āpā)ṇaka-mahāvihāre vastāvyā-Gopāla-Mahiaru bha (bhā) rya-(ryā) Mūlūkāyā devadharma kṛitaṁ.*

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image by Mūlūka, the wife of Gopāla-Mahiaru, a resident of the Āpāṇaka monastery, in the 32nd year of king Rājyapāla.)

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 153.

Remarks: See also Appendix, nos. 21 and 22 for this monastery, which is apparently variously spelled in the inscriptions (or in the transcriptions).

24. Subject: Balarāma (Fig. 48)

Provenance: unknown

Material: metal

Date: the year 37 of Rājyapāla

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

(Records the gift of an image of Balabhadra by a donor [name not clear] who was a resident of *bhaṭa Jivāla Grāma*, in the Rajagriha *vishaya*, in the 37th regnal year of Rājyapāla.)

Reference: Gorakshkar, "Some Inscribed Balarāma Images," p. 29.

25. Subject: Vāgīśvarī (Fig. 49)

Provenance: Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 1 of Gopāla (II)

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

In the eighth of the waxing moon in the month of Āsvina, Samvat 7, the most worshipful, the great king of kings, the great lord, Śrī Gopāla Rājā, and his wife the worshipful Vāgīśvarī of the country of Suvallavi, erected this.

Reference: Broadley, "Buddhist Remains," p. 309.

Remarks: Broadley notes that the translation is by Rajendralala Mitra. He states that the reading of *nī māna* is controversial and that Cunningham read these letters as "Nalanda."

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Samvat 1, Aswin badi 8, parama bhattāraka Maharaja-dhiraja parmeswara Sri Gopāla rājāni Sri Nalandayam*
2. *Sri Vagiswari \* \* \**

Translation:

In the year 1, on the 8th day of the waxing moon of Aswin, in the reign of the paramount sovereign, the king of kings, the supreme lord, the auspicious *Gopāla*, in Nālandā, \* \* \* the auspicious *Vagiswari* (a goddess).

Reference: Cunningham, *ASR*, III, p. 120. For a slightly different transliteration, see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1622.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

In the year 1, the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Āśvina, while the paramount sovereign, the king of kings, the great lord Gopāla was king, at Nālandā the Goddess Vāgīśvarī was tinged with gold streaks.

Reference: Chakravartti, "Pāla Inscriptions," p. 106.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

This idol of the Goddess of Learning endowed with Corns (was established) on the eighth day of bright moon of the month of Āśvina in the first year of the reign of His Highness Paramount Sovereign Mahārājādhirāja Gopāladeva.

Reference: Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, p. 188.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

At Nālandā, on this eighth day of bright moon of the month of Āśvina, in the first year of the kingdom of His Highness paramount monarch Lord Gopāla; the revered Goddess of Learning has been decorated with Golden vessels.

*Reference:* Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, p. 192.

*Remarks:* Mukherji and Maity present the above two readings as if they belonged to difference pieces; however, it is clear that they refer to the same image as may be determined from the sources cited in their text as well as their identical Devanāgarī transcriptions.

26. *Subject:* Gaṇeśa (Fig. 50)*Provenance:* Mandhuk, Comilla District, Bengal*Material:* stone*Date:* the year 1 of Gopāla (II)*Inscription:*

1. *Om* (by symbol) *Śrī-Gopāladeva-prathama-rāje mātā-pitr-pūrvan = gaman kṛtvā,*
2. *sakala-satva-rāse (rāseḥ) anuttara-jñāna lābhau (lābhāya) deva-dharmō = ya(m) vṛiddha*
3. *sārtha-Jambhalamitrena (ṇa) kṛiyatam (kāritam) = iti || om*

*Translation:*

This pious work was caused to be made in the first year of the reign of the illustrious Gopāladeva by an old man of means, Jambhalamitra, with this in view that all created beings, with his parents on the first rank, may attain the supreme enlightenment.

*Reference:* Sanyal, "Mandhuk Inscribed Image," p. 6.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

1. *Siddham || śrī-Gopāladeva-prathama-rāje mātā-pitr-pūrvan-gama[m] kṛtv[ā]*
2. *sakala-satva-rāse(ṣeḥ) [anuttara]-jñāna-lābhau deva-dharmo = ya[m] vṛ[ddha]-*
3. *sārtha-Jambhalamitrena (ṇa) kṛyat[ā]m = iti || Siddham ||*

*Translation:*

Let there be success! This meritorious offering is caused to be made by the old merchant Jambhalamitra for the attainment of supreme knowledge by all creatures, headed by his parents, during the first year of the reign of Śrī-Gopāladeva. Let there be success!

*Reference:* D.C. Sircar, "Pāla Rule in the Tippera District," p. 57.

*Remarks:* Sircar observes that Jambhalamitra may be the same individual mentioned in the inscription of the Nārāyaṇpur Gaṇeśa image of the reign of Mahīpāla. See Appendix, no. 30.

27. *Subject:* Pedestal of a Buddhist image (Fig. 51)*Provenance:* Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar*Material:* stone*Date:* reign of Gopāla (II)*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

May the Jina be for your welfare; who making friendliness his armour and wielding the bright sword of mercy put down the heavy uproar of the army of Kandarpa, which was like that of the ocean at the end of a kalpa, whose body was more radiant than the fire at the end of a kalpa, and whose brows were frowning with anger. Who was like unto the autumnal moon on account of the mass of his fame, whose mind was a bee to the lotus feet of the fully awakened one, who was known in the world as Dhārmabhīma, and whose mind was not a little moistened with kindness, by that Śakrasena this image of the saint was dedicated in hopes of the unsurpassed knowledge for the mitigation of the suffering of the world. In the reign of the illustrious Gopāladeva.

*Reference:* Chakravartti, "Pāla Inscriptions," p. 105. For Romanization of the section with the king's name, see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1623.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

V. 1 May Lord Buddha, possessing a beautiful figure, endowed with the lustre of shining gold bestow prosperity on you,—Buddha, who has put an end to the deep roar of the ocean of marching army of Cupid, indicating destruction, with the help of sword in the shape of excessive flow of kindness and by making friendliness his armour, and thereby has defeated Cupid, having a body, shining with fire, blazing at the time of dissolution of the world and with eye-brows, contracted in anger.

V. 2 There was a man, born in the family of Sindhus (in the land of Sindhus?), who gained reputation in the world by the name of Śrī Dhārmabhīma. His voluminous fame shone like rays of the autumnal moon and the drone in the shape of his mind, softened with excessive compassion was attached to the lotus-feet of Lord Buddha.

V. 3 Under the orders of that Śakasena (Śakrasena?) desirous of attaining highest enlightenment, this image of the sage (Lord Buddha) has been made for annihilation of sorrow of all beings.

*Reference:* Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 186-87.

*Remarks:* The last line of the inscription, which mentions the reign of Gopāla, is omitted by Mukherji and Maity.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

V. 1 May Lord Buddha, having his body rendered beautiful by the lustre of gold



in the shape of contemplation bestow good to us,—Buddha, who by making, friendliness his armour and holding the sword in the shape of deep compassion silenced the tumultuous uproar of the dangerous ocean of increasing Cupid-Army, and thereby defeated him (cupid), having a frame, shining with fire, blazing at the end of the cycles, and possessing eye-brows contracted in anger.

V. 2 and 3 By the orders of Śakasena, desirous of attaining highest knowledge,—that highly compassionate person, born in the land of Sindhus and well-known in the Earth by the name of Dhārmabhīma,—having a mass of fame, as white as the rays of autumnal moon and having a drone in the shape of his mind attached to the lotus feet of Lord Buddha—this figure of His Holiness was carved out in order to ward off the calamities of the world.

In the kingdom of Śrī Gopāladeva.

Reference: Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 190-91.

Remarks: Mukherji and Maity provide the above two readings but apparently did not recognize that they were of the same inscription.

28. Subject: Gaurī with Sadyojāta Śiva

Provenance: Mahāsthāngarh, Bogra District, Bengal

Material: stone?

Date: reign of Vigrahapāla (II)

Inscription:

Not published.

Translation:

Not published.

Reference: Enamul Haque, "The Iconography of the Hindu Sculptures of Bengal, up to circa 1250 A.D." (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oxford, 1973), p. 484 and Appendix A, List, no. 1523.

Remarks: Haque remarks that the inscription was read by Dr. de Casparis (p. 484, n. 128), but he does not provide a transcript or translation. The inscription names the subject of the sculpture as Gaurī Śilāmayī, that is, according to Haque, Gaurī with Sadyojāta Śiva, and Haque believes that this lays to rest at last the controversy over the identification of the sculptures of the reclining female with child. For a discussion of the subject, see Haque, "Iconography," pp. 479-485. The present sculpture is in the Mahāsthān Museum at Bogra. See also p. 55 and chapter 6, n. 81 of this work.

29. Subject: Viṣṇu (Fig. 52)

Provenance: Bāghaurā, Comilla District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 3 of Mahīpāla (I)

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

May success attend. The year three, the 27th day of Māgha. In Samataṭa, in the kingdom of Śrī Mahīpāla-dēva, this meritorious work, namely (the image of) the lord Nārāyaṇa, is of the merchant Lōkadatta, belonging to (the village of) Bilakīn-

daka—a great devotee of Viṣṇu—son of Vasudatta, for the furtherance of the spiritual merit and fame of himself and parents.

Reference: Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions," p. 355. Bhattasali gives a similar, though not identical, translation in "A Note on the Baḍkamta Nartteśvara Image Inscription," p. 18. See also D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1624.

30. Subject: Gaṇeśa (Vināyaka) (Fig. 53)

Provenance: Nārāyaṇpur, Comilla District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 4 of Mahīpāla (I)

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

(This image of) of [sic.] Lord Viṇāyaka who is perfectly unmalicious (?) is established, on the seat that is the property of Ayana, at Bhaśakāga (?) by the merchant Buddhāmītra, son of the illustrious merchant and great householder (?) Jambhālamītra, and an inhabitant of Bilikandhaka in Samataṭa, for the increase of the merit and fame of himself and his parents, on the twenty-fifth day of Āśādhā in the fourth year of the increasingly victorious reign of the illustrious Mahārājādhirāja Mahīpāla-deva. (The god) should receive offerings that should always be of the same value. (The sculptor?) is [Vi?]pūnyeśa who is disciple of Kāla.

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Nārāyaṇpur Vināyaka," p. 125.

Remarks: Sircar notes that the Bāghaurā Viṣṇu was also given by an inhabitant of Bilakīndaka (see Appendix, no. 29). Jambhālamītra may be the same individual mentioned in the inscription of the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa (Appendix no. 26 above).

31. Subject: Eight Life Scenes of Buddha (Fig. 54)

Provenance: Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 10 or 11 of Mahīpāla (I)

Inscription:

[1. includes words *māta-pitri*, etc.]

2. *Parama bhaṭṭāraka, parama Saugata Sri man Mahīpāla Deva pravardhamāna vijaya rāje \* \* dasame Samvatsare \* \**

Translation:

In the 10th year of the prosperous and victorious reign of the paramount king, the eminent Buddhist, the fortunate Mahīpāla Deva.

Reference: Cunningham, ASR III, p. 122. For a similar version, see also Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, p. 65. Also given in Rajendralala Mitra, *Buddha Gaya*, pp. 198-99.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Deya-dharmmoyām ... tad-bhavatv = ācāry = opādhāya-mātā-pitṛ-pūrvvaṅgamam kṛtvā sakala-satva-rāśer = anuttara-jñān = āvāptaya-iti Mahā-*

2. *[rājādhirāja-Parameśvara-Pa]ramabhaṭṭāraka-Paramasaugata-Śrī-mān = Mahīpāladeva-pravarddhamāna-vijayarājye ekādaśame samvatsare abhiliḥhya[māne]*

3. ... *pañcamyān* = *tithau gandha-Kūṭi-dvaya-sahitā* ... *karitāv* = *iti*

Translation: none given

Reference: R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 75; rpt. p. 35. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1627.

32. Subject: Sculpted door frame (Figs. 55, 56, 57)

Provenance: Temple of Bālāditya, Nālandā, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 11 of Mahīpāla (I)

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

In the reign of Śrīmat Mahīpāla Deva. Samvat 913 (= A.D. 856). This is a religious gift of Bālāditya, the son of Gurudatta, and grandson of Haradatta, a follower of the noble Mahāyāna school, a devoted worshiper, who came from (the city of) Kausāmbī, (wherein he was) the chief among the wise men of the auspicious Tailādhaka (clan). Whatever merit may accrue from this, may the same be to the advancement of the highest knowledge among the mass of mankind. The end.

Reference: Broadley, "Buddhistic Remains," p. 310.

Remarks: Broadley explains how the date was evolved by the translator (Rajendralala Mitra): the word *agni* (fire) is equivalent to the numeral 3, *rāgha* (power) equals the numeral 1 and *dvāra* (door) equals 9, which is transposed by the rule of *ankasya vāmāgati* to the date 913. In a footnote (p. 310) to the above explanation, however, Mitra says that he has re-examined the inscription and that the figures or symbolical letters for the year were never put in. He says that what he read as *rāgha* is *radha* (which is a name for Vaiśakha, i.e. April-May) and that *dvāratate* would not refer to a numeral but would mean "spread on the door, i.e. the gift was given at the gate." Thus, the date would be the 3rd day of Vaiśakha.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Sri Man Mahipāla De*

2. *va rājye Samvat 11*

Translation:

In the 11th year of the reign of the fortunate Mahīpāla Deva.

Reference: Cunningham, ASR, III, pp. 122-23.

Remarks: This transliteration and translation represent only the opening lines of the inscription.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

The 11th year of the reign of the fortunate King Mahīpāladeva. This is the pious gift of Bālāditya, the son of Gurudatta and grandson of Haradatta, a follower of the

greater vehicle, the best of the lay-disciples, an inhabitant of Telādhaka, and an emigrant from Kośambi, when the place was restored after a conflagration. Whatever merit ...

Reference: Chakravartti, "Pāla Inscriptions," p. 107. See also D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1626.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

This gift for propagation of religion, made at the time of renovation (of the temple) destroyed by fire is from Bālāditya, son of Gurudatta and grandson of Haradatta, —come from Kausāmbī and settled in Tailādhaka,—professing the faith of Pravara Mahājāna sect. May the religious merit accrued from this lead to enlightenment of all beings.

Reference: Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, p. 209.

Remarks: The translation above does not include the date portion of the inscription which occurs in the first line.

33. Subject: Pedestal of a seated Buddha image (Fig. 58)

Provenance: Sārnāth, Uttar Pradesh

Material: stone

Date: Samvat 1083 and reign of Mahīpāla (I)

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

Om, adoration to Buddha! The illustrious Sthirapāla (and his) younger brother, the illustrious Vasantapāla, whom the lord of Gauḍa, the illustrious Mahīpāla, caused to establish in Kāśī hundreds of precious monuments of his glory, such as Īśānas (i.e. *Liṅgas*), paintings, and bells, after he had worshipped the foot of Gurava-Śrī-Vāmarāśi, which is like a lotus in the lake of Vārāṇasī surrounded, as it were, by *śaivala*-plants through the hair of bowing kings,—they, who have made their learning fruitful, and who do not turn back (on their way) to supreme knowledge (*bodhi*), repaired the *Dharmarājikā* (and) the *Dharmachakra* with all its parts, and constructed this new *Gandhakuṭi* (made of) stones (coming from) eight holy places. Samvat 1083, on the 11th day of Pausa.

Reference: Hultsch, "Sarnath Inscription," pp. 139-40.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

Adoration to Buddha. Having worshipped the lotus foot of Sri-Dhama-rāsi, sprung from the lake of Vārānasi, and having for its moss the hairs of prostrate

kings, the fortunate Mahipāla, king of Gauḍa, caused to be built in Kāśi hundreds of monuments, such as *Isāna* and *Chaitraghaṇṭa*.

The fortunate *Sthira-pāla*, and his younger brother, the fortunate *Vasanta-pāla*, having renewed religion completely in all its parts, have raised a tower (*Saila*) with an inner chamber, *garbha-kuti*, and eight large niches, in Samvat 1083, the 11th day of Pausa.

Reference: Translation was by a student of Benares College, as given by Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, p. 65.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Om namo Buddāya || Vārāṇasī(sī)-sarasyām Gurava-Śrī-Vāmarāśi-pādābjam | āradhya namita-bhūpati śīroruhaiḥ śaival-ādhiśam || Isāna-Citragnaṇṭādi-kīrtti-ratna-śatāni yau | Gauḍ-ādhipo Mahīpālaḥ Kāśyām śrīman = akāra-*[yat]* ||*
2. *Saphalī-kṛta-pāṇḍityau bodhāv = avinivarttinau | tau Dharmarājikām sāṅgam Dharm-machakram punar = navam | Kṛtavantau ca navīnām = aṣṭamahāsthāna-śaila-gandha-kuṭīm | etām Śrī-Sthirapālo Vasantapālo 'nujaḥ śrīman [|| \*]*
3. *Samvat 1083 Pauṣa-dine 11 [|| \*]*
- 4.-5. *Yedharmā, etc.*

Translation:

Om. Adoration to the Buddha! The illustrious Sthirapāla [and his] younger brother, the illustrious Vasantapāla, whom the lord of Gauḍa, the illustrious Mahīpāla caused to establish in Kāśī [the temples of] *Isāna* (Śiva) and *Citragnaṇṭa* (Durgā), and other precious monuments of his glory in hundreds—after he had worshipped the foot of Gurava Śrī Vāmarāśi, which is like a lotus in the lake of Vārāṇasī surrounded, as it were, by Śaivala plants through the hair of bowing kings; they who have made learning fruitful, and who do not turn back [on their way] to supreme knowledge, restored Aśoka's *stūpa* and [the shrine of] the wheel of the Law completely, and built this new temple of stone from the eight holy places. Anno 1083 on the 11th day of Pauṣa. (Follows Buddhist Creed.)

Reference: Vogel, "Buddhist Sculptures," pp. 222-23.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Om namo Buddāya || Vārāṇasī(sī)-sarasyām Gurava-Śrī-Vāmarāśi-pādābjam | āradhya namita-bhūpati-śīroruhaiḥ śaival-ādhiśam || Isāna-Chitragnaṇṭādi-kīrtti-ratna-śatāni yau | Gauḍādhipo Mahīpālaḥ Kāśyām śrīman = akāra-*[yat]* ||*
2. *Saphalīkṛta-pāṇḍityau bodhāv = avinivarttinau | tau Dharmarājikām sāṅgam Dharm-machakram punar = navam || Kṛtavantau cha navīnām = aṣṭamahāsthāna-śaila-gandha-kuṭīm | etām-Śrī Sthirapālō Vasantapālō] nujaḥ śrīman [|| \*]*
3. *Samvat 1083-Pauṣa-dinē 11 [|| \*]*

Translation:

Om. Adoration to the Buddha! The illustrious Sthirapāla [and his] younger brother, the illustrious Vasantapāla, whom the lord of Gauḍa (Bengal), the illustrious Mahī-

pāla, caused to establish in Kāśī [the temples of] *Isāna* (Śiva) and *Chitragnaṇṭa* (Durgā) and other precious monuments of his glory in hundreds—after he had worshipped the foot of Gurava Śrī-Vāmanāśi, which is like a lotus in the lake of Vārāṇasī surrounded, as it were, by *śaivala* plants through the hair of bowing kings; they who have made learning fruitful and who do not turn back [on their way] to supreme knowledge, restored the *stūpa* and [the shrine or the Convent of] the wheel of law completely, and built this new shrine (*gandhakuṭi*) of stone relating to the eight great places. Samvat 1083, on the 11th day of Pausa.

Reference: Sahni, *Catalogue*, pp. 88-89.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

The two brothers Princes Sthirapāla and Vasantapāla, who were entrusted with the charge of construction of hundreds of notable things, such as *Isāna*, *Citragnaṇṭa* and the like at Kāśī by Mahīpāla, the lord of Gauḍa, after worshipping at the lake of Vārāṇasī the lotus-feet of his preceptor Bāmarāśi,—feet, which being covered by hair of bent-down kings looked like a clustre of mosses,—brothers, who being of fruitful scholarship never deviated from the path of enlightenment—renovated the Dharmastupa and the entire wheel of religion and reconstructed the holy shrine made of stones and containing eight great positions.

On the eleventh day of Pouṣa in the year 1085 Śaka Era.

Of all objects which proceed from a cause, the Tathāgata has explained the cause; and he has explained their cessation also: This is the doctrine of the great Śramaṇa.

Reference: Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp. 220-21.

Remarks: Apparently the word "Śaka" has been inserted here in reference to the date but does not appear in the actual inscription. This addition is incorrect in that the date is usually taken to refer to the Vikrama era since Śaka 1085 would fall outside of Mahīpāla's reign.

#### 34. Subject: *Nāgas* (Fig. 59)

Provenance: Tetrāwān or Ghorakatore, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: reign of Mahīpāla (I)?

Inscription:

[Not given]

Translation:

[Only the name *Mahīpāla* has been read.]

Reference: Broadley, "Buddhist Remains," p. 281.

-OR-

Inscription:

L.1: *Śrīmato Madrarudrasya Mūla-Sarvāstivādinah Śishyas-tad-anurūpo ... Viśrutah.*

L.2: [Starts with] *Kumudapathipasya* ... [and towards the end has] *guni jñānabhadra* (nam?) *Nāgaḥ*.

L.3: [Ends with] ... *sthāpito Nāgaḥ*.

Translation:

(Inscription refers to the setting up of a Nāga image and mentions in that connection the name of *Madrarudra* who belonged to the sect of the *Mūla-Sarvāstivādins* and also his disciple who was like him. The image seems to have been set up by one who was connected with this order of Buddhist teachers.)

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 76.

35. Subject: Ascetic Buddha

Provenance: Tetrāwāñ, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: reign of Mahīpāla (I)?

Inscription:

[Not published]

Translation:

[Only the name *Mahīpāla* has been read.]

Reference: Cunningham, ASR, I, p. 39; idem, III, p. 123.

Remarks: Cunningham calls the figure an "ascetic" Buddha; however, I do not know whether this refers to a depiction of the fasting Buddha, or simply a Buddha in a standard posture who may be considered to be an ascetic by Cunningham in any depiction. Cunningham is apparently the only one who saw the now lost piece. It was more than three meters high. The large image at the site today does not seem to bear an inscription of Mahīpāla's reign.

36. Subject: Viṣṇu (Fig. 60)

Provenance: Nimdighi, Rajshahi District, Bengal

Material: metal

Date: the year 23 of Mahīpāla (I)

Inscription:

Not published.

Translation:

Not published.

Remarks: Information about the piece and the reading of the date were kindly supplied to me by Dr. Enamul Haque of the Dacca Museum.

37. Subject: Cuṇḍā (Fig. 61)

Provenance: Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 31 or 21 of Mahīpāla (I)

Inscription:

1. *Svasti śrīman = Mahīpāla-deva-rā(jyasa\*)*.

2. *mvat 31 suvarṇṇa-kāra-Kesavassa* ...

3. *sya (?) devadharmma*.

Translation:

The gift of the goldsmith Keśava in the 31st year of the illustrious Mahīpāla.  
Reference: Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," p. 245.

-OR-

Inscription:

*Siddham ś[r\*]īman-Mahi(hī)pāladeva-rājye Samvata(vat) 31 suvarṇṇakāra-Keśavāsūta-devadharmmo = yaḥ(m\*)*.

Translation:

The gift of ... son of the goldsmith Keśava in the 31st year of the reign of the illustrious Mahīpāla.

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 149.

Remarks: The year was read as 21 by R.C. Majumdar, "Some Dates," p. 218, n. 1.

38. Subject: Balarāma, Ekānamśā and Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva (Fig. 62)

Provenance: Imādpur, Muzaffarpur District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 48 of Mahīpāla (I)

-AND-

39. Subject: Gaṇeśa, Brahmāṇī, Kumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Kubera (Fig. 63)

Provenance: Imādpur, Muzaffarpur District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 48 of Mahīpāla (I)

[Note: These two pieces will be considered together since there is confusion between them in the published literature.] See also D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1628.

Inscription:

*Sri-man Mahipāla Deva Rājye Samvat 48 Jveshta dine, Suklapaksha 2 ... Deva-dharma*

Translation:

[The images were] made during the reign of the fortunate Mahipāla Deva, in Samvat 48, on the 2nd day of the waxing moon of Jyeshta.

Reference: Cunningham, ASR, XVI, p. 88, n. 1.

Remarks: Cunningham read the inscriptions on the two pieces as being identical.

-OR-

Inscription:

*Śrīman-Mahipāladevarājasa samatt 48 jeshṭha dina sukala-paksha 2.*

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: Hoernle, "Palas of Bengal," p. 165, n. 17.

Remarks: Hoernle read the inscriptions on the two pieces as being identical. The above transliteration with slight modifications is cited in R.C. Majumdar and J.N. Banerjea, "Two Inscribed Images," p. 249.

-OR-

*Inscription* (Mus. # 1881, 10-10,1; Fig. 62):

*Srīman Mahīpāla deva rāja samatta 48 jeṣṭha dine sukala pakṣa 2, laoo ... oo ... deydharṃmo.*

*Inscription* (Mus. # 1881, 10-10,2; Fig. 63):

*Srīman Mahīpāladevarāja samatta 48 jeṣṭha dine sukala pakṣa 2 ... laoo ... oo ... deya.*

*Translation(s):*

[Not given.]

*Reference:* C.C. Daś Gupta, "Two Unpublished Dated Pāla Bronzes," pp. 247-48.

-OR-

*Inscription* (on one image):

*Om Śrīman-Mahīpāladeva-rāja sam 148 jeṣṭha-dine sukala-pakṣa 2 ālaicakoiri Māhava-sūta sāhi devadharṃma.* (Two letters *kara* are written at the right end, above the line, and in a position which seems to indicate that they are to be inserted after *sāhi*.)

*Inscription* (on the other image):

*Om Śrīman-Mahīpāladeva-rāja Sam 148 jeṣṭha-dine sukala-pakṣa 2 ālaicakoiri sāhi vahupa [or pu] ṭhaūkara deva(dharma)*

*Translation(s):*

[Not given.]

*Reference:* R.C. Majumdar and J.N. Banerjea, "Two Inscribed Images," p. 249.

*Remarks:* Majumdar read the date as 148, not simply 48. He further read the two inscriptions as having differences. However, like Das Gupta (above), he neglects to indicate which inscription belongs to which piece. I have, therefore, presented the two together. Majumdar's reading of the date as 148 is repudiated by D.C. Sircar ("Date of the Imādpur Image," pp. 382-87). Later, Majumdar himself seems to have abandoned his view. See Chpt. 3, n. 153 in this work.

40. *Subject:* Puṇḍeśvarī

*Provenance:* Rājāunā, Monghyr District, Bihar

*Material:* stone

*Date:* reign of Nayapāla

*Inscription:*

1. Pā(Pa)ramabhaṭṭāraki(ka)-
2. Parameśvara-[i]tyā-
3. di-ra(rā)jāvali-śrīman-Nā(Na)yapālade-
4. va-paravardhamāna-vi[ra]ya-rājye
5. Samvat 13
6. Āṣāḍha-dine 24
7. Krimiliyāh (?)|
8. samasta-mahā
9. Trikadaḥ
10. Śrī-Puṇḍeśvarī-bhaṭṭārī(ri)kāh(kā) (|)  
Sānakasya devadha[r]mo = yam(yam)  
Mahātrikaḍa-samarpitāritiḥ (||)

*Translation:*

This is the pious gift of Sānaka dedicating in Mahātrikaḍa(?) of Krimilā(?) the image of Puṇḍeśvarībhaṭṭārīkā on the 24th Āṣāḍha of the 13th regnal year of the victorious reign of the illustrious Nayapāladeva.

*Reference:* P. Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions," p. 109.

41. *Subject:* Crowned Buddha (Fig. 69)

*Provenance:* Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

*Material:* metal

*Date:* the year 3 of Vighrahapāla (III)

*Inscription:*

1. Svasti-śrīma-Vighrahapāladeva-vijaya-rāje sammat 3.
2. devadharṃmo = 'yam pravara-mahāyāna-jaina pramopāsa-
3. ka-Dulapa-sutaḥ Tīkukasya.

*Translation:*

(Records the gift of the image in the 3rd year of King Vighrahapāla by Tīkuka, the son of the Mahāyāna lay worshipper Dulapa.)

Blessing. Year 3 of His Majesty Vighrahapāladeva's victorious reign, this is the sacred gift of Tīkuka, son of Dulapa the devoted worshipper of the great Mahāyāna Jaina.

*Reference:* Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," p. 240.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

1. Siddham (by symbol) śrīma[n\*]-Vī(i)grahapāladeva-vī(vi)jaya-rāj[y\*]e sammat (samvat) 3.
2. devadharṃmo = yam pravara-mahājā(yā)na-jā(yā) [y\*]ina[h\*]pra (para)-mopāsa-
3. Ka-Dūlapa-sutaḥ (tasya) Tīkukasya.

*Translation:*

(Records the gift of the image in the 3rd year of king Vighrahapāla by Tīkuka, the son of the Mahāyāna lay-worshipper Dūlapa.)

*Reference:* P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 131-32.

*Remarks:* For inscriptions of another son and a wife of Dūlapa, see Nos. 43 and 44 below.

42. *Subject:* Viṣṇu (Fig. 68)

*Provenance:* Mandoil, Rajshahi District, Bengal

*Material:* metal

*Date:* the year 4 of Vighrahapāla (III)

*Inscription:*

*Svasti Śrī ma Vighrahapāla devasya rājya Sambat 4 Śrī Gayidanusya dharmmoyam*

*Translation:*

Svasti. In the 4th regnal year of Vighrahapāladeva/In the interest of Gayidanu's piety.

*Reference:* Siddhanta, "Some Recently Acquired Sculptures," p. 108.



-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Om* (by sign) *Śrīmavīgrahapāla devasya rājya sambat 4*
2. *Śrīgayīdanusya dharmāyaḥ ||*

Translation:

In the 4th year of the reign of Śrī Vīgrahapāladeva (the image was made) for the religious (benefit) of Śrī Gayīdanu.

Reference: Chowdhury, "Mandoil Viṣṇu Image," p. 49.

## 43. Subject: Crowned Buddha (Fig. 70)

Provenance: Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 19 of Vīgrahapāla (III)

Inscription:

1. *Svasti śrīman-Vīgrahapāla-devasya rājādhirājaḥ.*
2. *Pramabhaṭāka-rāje sammat 19 mahātama-*
3. *Dulapavadhu—Pekkhāyāḥ.*

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image in the 19th year of king Vīgrahapāla by Pekkhā, the wife or daughter-in-law of the mahātama Dulapa.)

Blessing. Of His Majesty Vīgrahapāladeva, the King of Kings. In the year 19 of his most pious reign, of the wife or daughter-in-law of Mahātama Dulapa.

Reference: Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," p. 240.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Siddham* (by symbol) *Śrīman-Vīgrahapāladevasya rājādhirājaḥ(ja)[sya\*]*
2. *pra(pa)rama-bhaṭā(tā)ra[ka][sya\*]-rāj[y\*]e sammatāḥ (samvat) 19 mahat[t\*]ama-*
3. *Dūlapa-vadhū- Yekkhāyāḥ.*

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image in the 19th year of king Vīgrahapāla by Yekkhā, the wife of the mahātama Dūlapa.)

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 133.

Remarks: For inscriptions referring to two sons of Dūlapa, see Nos. 41 and 44.

## 44. Subject: Crowned Buddha (Figs. 71-72)

Provenance: Kurkihār, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: metal

Date: the year 19 of Vīgrahapāla (III)

Inscription:

1. *Svasti śrīmant-Vīgrahapāla-deva-rājādhirājaḥ Prama (Parama)-bhaṭāraka-rāje sammat 19.*
2. *Mahātama Mṛidvala ... ta || Utīmarākasyaḥ.*

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image in the 19th year of king Vīgrahapāla probably by one

Utīmarāka. The meaning of a few lines at the beginning of the second line is not clear.)

Blessing. His Majesty Vīgrahapāla-deva, the King of Kings. The year 19 in the reign of the most pious sovereign.

Reference: Banerji-Sastri, "Ninety-Three Inscriptions," p. 239.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Siddham* (by symbol) *śrīmanata(śrīmataḥ) vī(vi)grahāḥ(ha)pāladevasya rājādhirājaḥ (jasya)pra(para)ma-bhā(bha)ta(tā)ra[ka][sya\*]-rāj[y\*]e sammatāḥ (samvat) 19.*
2. *mahā(ha)t(t\*)ama-Dūlapa-sūta-Utīmarākasyaḥ(ya).*

Translation:

(Records the gift of the image in the 19th year of king Vīgrahapāla by one Utīmarāka, the son of Mahātama Dūlapa.)

Reference: P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue*, p. 133.

Remarks: For inscriptions referring to another son and a wife of Dūlapa, see Nos. 41 and 43.

## 45. Subject: Lower half of female figure (Vasudhārā?) (Fig. 73)

Provenance: Naulāgarh, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 24 of Vīgrahapāla (III)

Inscription:

1. *Om Sri Vīgrahapāladeva rājye samvat 24 Krimītiya sāu-*
2. *ndika? Mahāmati duhitrā Dhāmmajīapatnyā Asokaya ka* (the last two words not distinct)

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: Chaudhary, "Naulagarh Inscription," p. 10.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *[Siddham ||] Śrī-Vīgrahapāladeva-rājye Samvata 24 Krimītiya sāu-*
2. *ndika-Mahāmati-duhitrā Dhāmmajī-patnyā Āśoka[yā] kā [ri\*] tā ||*

Translation:

[Let there be success.] (This image) is caused to be made by Āśokā (who is) the wife of Dhāmmajī and the daughter of Mahāmati, a vintner of Krimilā, in the year 24 of the reign of the illustrious Vīgrahapāladeva.

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Some Inscriptions from Bihar," p. 4.

## 46. Subject: Buddha in votive stūpa

Provenance: Uren, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone?

Date: reign of Rāmapāla

Inscription:

*Rājā Śrī-Ra(Rā)mapāladeva[h] (|) Devadharmo = yam Śrī(?) - Sumākaya(sya?) (||)*

Translation:

The pious gift of Śrī-Sumāka (?) [in the reign of king] Rāmapāladeva.

Reference: P. Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions," p. 111.

47. Subject: Tārā (Fig. 74)

Provenance: Tetrāwān, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 2 or 3 of Rāmapāla

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

This is a gift to gods, by the pious devotee Bhaṭṭa Ichchha, the son of Bhaṭṭa Naho. May the merit abiding in this, contribute to the welfare of all beings with his father and mother at the head! The second year of the king Śrī Rāmapati Deva; 28th day of Vaisākha.

Reference: Broadley, "Buddhistic Remains," p. 282.

-OR-

Inscription:

\* \* raje Sri Rāma Pāla Deva, Samvat 2 Vaisākha, dine 28

Translation:

In the year 2, the 28th day of Vaisākh, in the reign of the fortunate Rāma Pāla Deva.

Reference: Cunningham, ASR, III, p. 124.

Remarks: The year was read as 3, not 2, by S.N. Chakravarti ("Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390). For a slightly fuller transliteration of the inscription, see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1634.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

The pious gift of the best of lay-disciple Bhaṭṭa Īśvara, son of Bhaṭṭa Nābha, who was a follower of the greater vehicle. Whatever merit ... In the second year of the reign of Rāmapāla, 28th of Vaiśākha. Carved by Mahābita, the son of Setā.

Reference: Chakravarti, "Pāla Inscriptions," p. 109.

48. Subject: Buddha in votive *stūpa*

Provenance: Uren, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone?

Date: the year 14 of Rāmapāla

Inscription:

[Mahārājā]dhirāja-śrīmad-Rāmapa(pā)ladeva-v[īja]ya-ra(rā)j[ya]e Samvat 14 (||)

Translation:

[Dedicated] in the 14th year of the victorious reign of the illustrious Mahārājā-

dhirāja Rāmapāladeva.

Reference: P. Banerjee, "Some Inscriptions," p. 111.

49. Subject: Pedestal of an image (Devī)

Provenance: Ārmā, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 26 of Rāmapāla

Inscription:

[Not given.]

Translation:

[Records the gift of the image by Sōnikā, wife of the merchant Vāmbha in year 26 of Rāmapāla.]

Reference: *Indian Archaeology, a Review*, 1960-61, p. 44. (Also summarized in *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy for 1960-61*, p. 17.)

50. Subject: Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 75)

Provenance: Chandimau, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 42 of Rāmapāla

Inscription:

[Not given.]

Translation:

(It [the inscription] opens with the Buddhist creed, mentions the name of *Srimad-Rājagriha*, and after recording the gift of the statue by a Parama Upāsika, or chief lay brother, gives the name of the great sovereign, the King of kings, *Rāma Pāla Deva*. The record ends with the date of 'Samvat 12 Ashādha dine 30.')

Reference: Cunningham, ASR, XI, p. 169.

Remarks: Cunningham's reading of the year 12 is incorrect; it should read 42.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Om Yē dharmā hētu prabhavā hētū tēshām hy-avada [t] tēshām (cha) yō nīrōddhō ēvaṁ vādi mahāśramaṇaḥ || Śrī-mad-Rājagrihā (t) vinirggatēḥ || Eṭṭraha grāmavasthitāḥ || Paramōpāsaka Parama-mahajā(yā) nā [nu-yā] yinaḥ || Vaṇika Sādhu.*
2. *Saharaṇasya (?) Sādhu Bhādulva-sutasya yad-atra puṇyaḥ || Tad-bhavata = āchāry-ōpadhyāya mātā pita (pitṛi) purvvaṁgama (m) Kṛtvā sakala (satva) sāsē [r-anuttara] jñāna-phala-vāptaya itiḥ || Parama-bhaṭṭāraka Paramēśvara Pārāmaran(?)*
3. *[gata] ... [pādānudhyā]ta Mahārājādhirāja Śrīmad = Rāmapālādēva-pāda-pravaraddha-māna Kalyāṇa vijayarājyē samvat 42 Ashādha dine 30.*

Translation:

([The inscription] records the dedication of the image on the 30th day of Āshādha of the 42nd year of the reign of Rāmapāladeva of Bengal by a merchant named Sadhu Saharaṇa, son of the Sādhu Bhadulva, who was originally an inhabitant of Rājagriha.)

Reference: R.D. Banerji, "Four Sculptures from Chandimau," pp. 161-62.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Ye dharmmā hetu prabhavā hetu(m) teṣām hy = avadat(t) eṣām(m) yo niroddho evaṁ vādī mahāśramaṇaḥ | Śrī-mad = Rājagṛha vinirggateḥ Etrahāgrāmāvasthitaḥ || Paramopāsaka paramamahājān (ānuy) āyinaḥ | Vanika Sādhu.*
2. *Saharaṇasya Sādhu Bhādulvasutasya yadatra puṇyaḥ || Tad-bhavatv-ācaryopādhyāya-mātā-pita purvvaṅgama (m)kṛtvā sakala (satva) rāser-ajñāna phalavāptaya iti || Parama-bhaṭṭāraka Parameśvara Paramasau (?)*
3. ... *ta | Mahārajādhirāja Śrī-mad = Rāmapāladevapāda pravarddhamāna-kalyāṇa vijayarājye samvat 42 Āṣāḍha dine 30.*

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, pp. 93-94; rpt. pp. 53-54.

Remarks: Banerji's two readings of the inscription have a number of differences as seen in the two Romanized versions above.

## 51. Subject: Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 76)

Provenance: Kiul, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: reign of Gopāla? (III)

Inscription:

1. *Om ... gopale ...*
2. ... *(Skan?) dha dharani ...*

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: Chaudhary, "Lakhsisarai Inscription," p. 24.

## 52. Subject: Sadāśiva (Fig. 77)

Provenance: Rajibpur, Dinajpur District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 14 of Gopāla (III)

Inscription:

1. *Om (by symbol) Parameśvar-ety-ā(di)-śrīmad-Gopāladeva-pādānām-vimjaya(vijaya)-rājye śrī-*
2. *mat-Sadāśivapādāḥ san(dh)i-[sa]-śrī-Purushottamena pratishṭhitāḥ sam 14*
3. ... *dā-i ...*

Translation:

(... records the erection of the image of Sadāśiva in the 14th regnal year of Gopāla-deva by one Purushottama, who is described as *sandhi-sa*.)

Reference: N.G. Majumdar, "Indian Museum, Calcutta," p. 131.

Remarks: R.C. Majumdar ("Some Dates," p. 216) originally believed that the reading of the numeral 4 in the date was questionable; he suggested that the date might only be the year one. He later amended his view after having seen a better facsimile of the inscription, agreeing that the date should be read as the year 14 (Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, "Epigraphic Notes—Rajibpur Sadāśiva Image Inscription of Gopala III, Year 14," *Ind. Cult.* XI,3 [1944-45], p. 125).

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

May success attend. In the victorious reign of the illustrious Gopāla Deva, the Parameśvara, etc., (the image of) the beautiful god Sadāśiva was consecrated by the minister (?) Purusottama. The year 14. The 15th (25th?) day of Māgha.

Reference: Nalini Kanta Bhattasali, "Two Inscriptions of Gopāla III of Bengal," *IHQ* XVII (1941):218.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *aumparameśvaretyā(di)śrīmadgopāladevapādānāmviṣṭarājyeśrī-*
2. *matsadāśivapādāḥsa(ndhisa)śrīpurushottamanapratishṭhitāḥsam 14*
3. ... *dā ...*

Translation:

Not given.

Reference: Claudine Picron, "Gopāla II ou Gopāla III, Xe ou XIIe siècle Datation d'une Image de Śiva," *Arts Asiatiques*, XXXIV (1978) : 110.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Siddham symbol. Parameśvar-ety-ā[di]-śrī-mad-Gopāladevapādānāmviṣṭarājya(rājye)śrī-*
2. *mat-Sadāśivapādāḥ san[t]i(t = ī)[ha]śrī-Pū(Pu)-ruṣottamena pratishṭhitāḥ sam 14*
3. *[M]āgha-[d]i[na 15]*

Translation:

Let it be well. Installed by the illustrious Puruṣottama during the victorious reign of the glorious Gopāladeva, endorsed with [the titles] *Parameśvara*, etc., the holy Sadāśiva stands here: year 14, the 15th day of Māgha.

Reference: Personal letter from D.C. Sircar dated 16th February 1981.

Remarks: I am extremely grateful to Dr. Sircar for the above reading. In his letter, Dr. Sircar notes: "The form of *ra* used in all the four cases of its occurrence in the Rajibpur inscription is expected in records later than the middle of the eleventh century so that the ascription of the epigraph to the time of Gopāla II of the tenth century cannot be accepted."

## 53. Subject: Pārvatī with Kārttikeya (Fig. 78)

Provenance: Bihār Hill, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 3 of Madanapāla

Inscription:

1. \* \* \* *Sri Man Madana Pā (la) Deva.*
2. *(vi)jayaraje \* \* Sam 3, Vaisākha dine 24.*

## Translation:

In the year 3, the 24th day of Vaisâkh, of the victorious reign of the fortunate Madana Pâla Deva.

Reference: Cunningham, ASR, III, p. 124. See also D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1638.

-OR-

## Inscription:

1. ...*ktā-di-rājā-matī pūrvavat śrīmato(n)- Madanapā[la-deva-pravardhamāna-]*
2. ...*[vi]jaya-rāj[ya]e sam(m)[va]t 3 Vais(ś)ākha-dine 24*
3. ...*datri (ttā?) || Deva(ya)-dharmoyam dānapati-na(na)u-*
4. ...*sama-ratha-sa(śa)kti-Māmayikasyaḥ ||*

## Translation:

The *rājāvalī* is as before. On the 24th day of the month of Vaisākha in the year 3 of the prosperous and victorious reign of Madanapāla this pious gift was made by Māmayika whose power lay in having possessed naval boats and chariots in equal number.

Reference: P. Banerjee, "Two Mediaeval Inscriptions," pp. 105-6.

Remarks: Broadley also refers to this inscription, although he describes the sculpture in great detail as a Buddha image surrounded by other smaller Buddhas, and not an image of Pārvatī. Apparently, Broadley matched the wrong inscription with the wrong piece when writing his essay. (The Buddha scene is apparently the one in Appendix, no. 17.) Following Rajendralala Mitra's transcript, Broadley provides the following reading of the inscription: "On the 24th of Vaisākha in the samvat—(?) of the Jaina king, the great king the worshipful Śrī Madana (Pāla) Deva reigning. This deed of religious gifts—Sāmayika." (Broadley, "Buddhist Remains," p. 287). What is even more confusing is the fact that the notation and description of the piece in Cunningham ASR, III, p. 124 seems to have been done by Broadley, who there identifies the image as Śaṣṭhī.

54. Subject: Pedestal of a Buddhist statue

Provenance: Jaynagar, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone?

Date: the year 19 or 14 of Madanapāla

## Inscription:

[1.-3. usual formula of gifts]

4. *Sri Man Madana Pāla Deva rājye. Samvat 19, Aswina 30.*

## Translation:

In the reign of the fortunate Madana Pāla Deva, in the year 19, the 30th of Aswin.

Reference: Cunningham ASR, III, p. 125.

Remarks: Cunningham read the year as 19 while R.C. Majumdar ("Some Dates," p. 216) read it as 14. See also D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1640.

55. Subject: Pedestal of an image

Provenance: Nōṅgaḍh, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone?

Date: [Vikrama?] [1]201; or, 201; reign of Madanapāla

## Inscription:

1. *Siddham (by symbol) [||\*] d[ē]va-dharmmō-yaṁ dā[na\*] pati-Śējas[ya]a Ḍakāyām vadhū-Asō(śō)kā-*
2. *yā ja(ya)d = atra p[u]ṇam [śrī]-Madanapāla-sammata [1]201 Māgra-di-*
3. *nē 23 [||\*]*

## Translation:

[Summary: Image was gift of *dānapati* Śēja and his wife *Asōkā*; deity installed at place called *Ḍakā*.]

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Bihar," pp. 41-42. (Also summarized in *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy for 1960-61*, p. 17.)

56. Subject: Pedestal of an image of Nārāyaṇa

Provenance: Valgūdar, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: Śaka 1083 (1161 A.D.); the year 18 of Madanapāla

## Inscription:

1. *Siddham [||\*] śrīman-Madanapā[la]-rājyā(jya)-sam 18 Jyaish[tha]-dinē 11 śrī-Kra (Kri)m-[i]lāyām bha-*
2. *[tā]-paṇḍita-śrī-V[yā]ya(sa?)-sutayōḥ bhāṭṭa-śrī-Sukī(kṛi)[tri]ma-bhrāṭri-bhāṭṭa-śrī-Abhī-*
3. *[nda]yōḥ parama vaishṇavayōḥ śrī[Nā]rāyaṇa- pratim = ēya[m] (yam) || Śaka-nṛiptē (paṭē)h 1083 [||\*]*

## Translation:

Let there be success! On the eleventh day of Jyaishṭha in the year 18 of the reign of the illustrious Madanapāla; at Krimilā; this image of the illustrious (*god*) Nārāyaṇa belongs to the illustrious *Bhāṭṭas* Abhi and Inda (Indra), who are devout worshippers of Viṣṇu, who are the brothers of the illustrious *Bhāṭṭa* Sukṛitrima and who are the sons of the illustrious *Bhāṭṭa paṇḍita* Vyāya (Vyāsa?). (*The year*) 1083 of the Śaka king.

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Valgudar," p. 145.

57. Subject: Pārvatī (Fig. 79)

Provenance: Viṣṇupāda temple, Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: Vikrama *samvat* 1232 (1175) A.D.; the year 14 of Govindapāla

## Inscription:

1. *Om (by symbol) om svasti namo bhagavate Vāsudevaya Vrahmaṇo dvitīya parārdhe |*
2. *Vārāha-kalpe vaivaśvata manvantare Aṣṭāvimśatime yuge kalau pūrvvasam-*
3. *-ndhyāyām samvat 1232 Vikāri sammvatsare Śrī Govindpāla-de-*
4. *-va-gatarājye caturddaśa sammvatsare Gayāyām || Vasiṣṭha-gotro-*
5. *-ti-guṇo dvivedaḥ Śrī Dallaṇo [||] sūta-sūtam mahāntam | Vidyādharam gu-*
6. *gulinam Gadābhṛṇ-maṭhe anākāri dhanā dvijānām || bhokṣātham-avdam pra-*
7. *ti-ṣo-ḍaś-aiva kārṣāpaṇī vṛddhita-eva ladhvāḥ Mūlaṇ-ca | pañcāsad-i*
8. *-h-āsti sākṣī Padm-ābhidhāno-tha ca Viśvarūpa || Nṛsimha Śrī-dharodeva*
9. *Dharo Śrī (?) daṇḍa (?) nā(ya)kau | Viṣṇu-seva-karau c-aite tapovana-nivāsinaḥ || Rāghavaḥ*

10. Śrīkaro } Sūko Dāmodarakaḥ Hīdharau Bhikhodeva nidhirdharmā c-aite pāla-
11. -na-kāriṇaḥ | A-caṇḍārkaṁ-imam dharmam pālayiṣyanti ye sukham | pratyavadam te-
12. -śvamedhasya phalam prāpsanti mānavāḥ || Āśvine śukla-pañcamyām bhojyam yo
13. vārayed-idam | Labhate sāv-asamdigdham mahāpātaka- pañcakam || praśasti-
14. -r-iyam kṛtā Śrī-Yuktendrena dikhita c-eyam Kājasīyī-Jaya-kumārābhyām ||
15. Om Someśvaro-tra sākṣasti Padmanābho Gayādvija Devarūpasya purato dattā c-aite Kapardakā |.

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 109; rpt. p. 69.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. Siddham O svasti [\*] namō bhagavatē Vāsudēvāya || Vra(Bra)hmaṇō dvitīya-parār-thē(rdhē)
2. Vārāha-kalpē Vaivaśva(sva)ta-manvam(nva)ntarē aṣṭa-vimśati[ta\*]mē yugē Kam(Ka)-lau pūrva-sam(sa)-
3. ndhyāyām Samvata 1232 Vikāri-samvva(va)tsarē śrī-Govindapālādē-
4. va-gata-rājyē chaturddaśa-samvva(va)tsarē Gayāyām || Vasi (si)shṭha-gōtrō =
5. tiguṇō divēdaḥ śrī-Dallaṇō = sūta sutam mahānta[m](ntam) | Vidyādharam gu-
6. gu(ggu)linam Gadābhṛin-mathē-mun ākān dhanā(nam) dvijānām(nām) || [1\*] Bhō-(Bha)ksh-ārtham avdam(bdam)pra-
7. ti shōḍaś = aiva kārshāpaṇi(nā)vṛiddhita ēva ladhvāḥ(bdhāḥ) | mūlañ = cha pañchāsa (śa)d = i-
8. h = āsti sākshī Padm-ābhīdhānō = tha cha Viśvarūpaḥ || [2\*] Nṛisimhaḥ Śrīdharō Dēva-
9. dharō = llī-Padmanā[bha\*]kau | Viṣṇu-sēva(vā)-karau ch = aitē tapōvana-nivāsinaḥ || [3\*] Rāghavaḥ
10. Śrīkarō = sūkō Dāmodarakaḥ(ka)-Hīdharau [\*] Bhikhō Dēvanidhir = Ddha[r]mmī ch = aitē pāla
11. na-kāriṇaḥ || [4\*] Ā-chandr-ārkaṁ = imam dha[r]mmam pālayiṣyanti yē sukham (kham) praty-avdam(bdam)tē =
12. śvamedhasya ha(pha)lam prāpsa(psy)nti mānavāḥ || [5\*] Āśvinē śukla-pañchamyām bhō(bha)ksham yō-
13. vārayēd = idam(dam) | labhatē = sāv = asamdigdham mahāpātaka-pañchakam(kam) || [6\*] praśasti-
14. r = iyam kṛtā śrī-Muktendrēna likhitā ch = ēyam kā-Jaśīyī-Jayakumārābhyām) ||
15. Ōm [||\*] Sōmēśvarō = tra sāksha(kshy = a)sti Pajmā(dam)nābhō Gayā-dvija[h] [\*] dēvarūpasya pū(pu)ratō dattā[ś\*] = ch = aitē kapardakā[h\*] || [7\*]

Translation:

[Verse 1 tells of a Divēda Brāhmaṇa at Gayā whose son, Vidyādhara (an incense burner in a temple) deposited some money at the temple of Gadābhṛit (Gadādhara) for the Brāhmaṇas. Verse 2 talks of the amount to the credit of Vidyādhara and the persons with whom the sum was deposited and the two witnesses (Padma and Viśvarūpa) to the endowment. Verse 3 mentions other witnesses and Verse 4

names the protectors of the endowment. Verse 5 states that those who would maintain the *dharma* (i.e. Vidyādhara's pious deed) every year would acquire the merit of the Aśvamēdha sacrifice. Verse 6 says that whoever would stop the feeding of the Brāhmaṇas on Āśvina-sudi 5 would be committing the five great sins. The above six verses are followed by a prose passage giving the names of the composer and scribes of the eulogy. One line of writing in the left margin is a separate endorsement regarding the endowment.]

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Three Pala Inscriptions," pp. 237-38.

Remarks: For more detailed contents of the inscription, refer to Sircar's article. The date appears in lines 3 and 4.

58. Subject: Image

Provenance: Lai, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone?

Date: year 32 (of Palapāla?)

Inscription:

[Not published.]

Translation:

[Summary: Image inscription of a chief named Yasahpala, dated in the year 32, apparently of the regnal reckoning of the chief's overlord, who, there are reasons to believe, was the Pāla king Palapāla.]

Reference: *Indian Archaeology, a Review*, 1953-54, p. 14.

59. Subject: Pūrṇeśvarī (or Puṇyeśvarī) (Fig. 80)

Provenance: Jaynagar, Monghyr District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 35 of Palapāla

Inscription:

Śrī-Gai(Gau)deś(v)ara-Palapāla-pādānām sam 35 Chai[tra]-dī 3.

Translation:

[Not given]

Reference: R.D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," p. 496. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1648.

Remarks: Banerji succeeded only in deciphering this portion of the inscription.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. Siddham (by symbol) śrī-Ge(Gau)deśva(ra\*)-Palapān(la)-pādānām Sam 35
2. Cai(tra)-dī(di) 3 śrī-Camṇāyām 2 hū Ūtakv[ena] bhaṭṭā
3. rī(ri)kā Puṇṇeśvarī saumāja-siddhava-sāmaṇa-
4. sāmghṛṇau haḍinevadā-samva-kuṭumva jadatra
5. punya ||

[Emended text]:

Siddham || śrī-Gauḍeśvara-Palapāla-pādānām Samvatsare 35 (pañcatrimśe) Caitra-divase 3 (trītiye) śrī-Camṇāyām = iha Ūtakvena bhaṭṭārikā Pūrṇeśvarī (or, Puṇyeśvarī) (pratiṣṭhāpitā



|\*) *siddhasamāja-śramaṇa-saṅghānām haḍini-baddha-sarva-kuṭumbānām (ca\*) yad = tra puṇyam (tat = sarvam bhavatu\*)* ||

NOTE: The last phrase has an opening parenthesis and a closing bracket.

Translation:

May there be success! On the 3rd day of (*the month of*) Caitra in the 35th year of the feet of Palapāla, the illustrious lord of Gauḍa, here at the illustrious (*city of*) Cāmpā, the (*goddess*) Bhaṭṭārikā Pūrṇeśvarī (or Puṇyeśvarī) (*is installed*) by Ūtakva. Whatever merit is here (i.e. in this work) (*let it go*) to the communities of *Siddhas* and the congregations of *Śramaṇas* (i.e. Buddhist monks) (*as well as*) to all the relatives of Ūtakva who are bound by the fetters (*of worldly existence*).

NOTE: The closing parenthesis after the word Ūtakva in the last sentence does not have an opening parenthesis to match it in the publication.

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Jaynagar Image," pp. 152-53.

#### PRATIHĀRA DYNASTY

60. Subject: Buddha Taming Nālāgiri (Fig. 38).

Provenance: Bihar (city? province? state?)

Material: stone

Date: the year 4 of Mahendrapāla

Inscription:

1. *Śrī-Mahindrapāladeva-rājya-samvachchhara chatutthe mā-*
2. *rgaśira-śuklapratipadāyām bhikṣu-D Dharmmamitra-*
3. *mātā Gautamā [puṇyārttham]*
4. *devaddharmoyam prati [pā]-*
5. *ditamiti*

Translation:

In the fourth year of the reign of Sri-Mahindrapaladeva, on the first day of the bright half of the month of Margasira (Agrahayana = November-December), this pious gift was executed for the religious merit of Gautami, the mother of the monk, Dharmmamitra.

Reference: Chanda, "Indian Museum, Calcutta," (1923-24), p. 102. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1642.

61. Subject: Seated Buddha (Fig. 39)

Provenance: Bihār Sharīf area, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 4 of Mahendrapāla

Inscription:

1. [*Om*] *Samvat 4 Chaitra śudī 10 śrī-Mahī(ē)ndrapālādēva-rājyē Saindhavā nām*
2. *dāna(ā)rthē Kumārabhandrē(drē)ṇa devaddh(dh)armma[h\*] pratipādī(i)taḥ*

Translation:

In the year 4, on the 10th day of the bright half of Chaitra during the reign of Mahēndrapālādēva (the image) was set up by Kumārabhadra as a gift of the Saindhavas (the residents of Sindh).

Reference: Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and its Epigraphical Material*, pp. 105-6.

62. Subject: *Daśavatāra*

Provenance: Rāmgayā, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 8 of Mahendrapāla

Inscription:

*Samvat 8: Sri Mahendra Pāla Rājye*

Translation:

In the year 8, of the reign of the fortunate Mahendra Pāla.

Reference: Cunningham ASR, III, p. 123. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1645.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Om Samvat 8 | Śrī-Mahīndrapāla | rājyābhise-*
2. *-ka Sauḍi Rīṣi putra Sahadevasya*

Translation:

Om, the year 8 (from) the coronation of Mahīndrapāla. (The gift) of Sahadeva, the son of the Rīṣi (*Rṣi*) Sauḍi (*Sauri*).

Reference: R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 64; rpt. p. 24.

63. Subject: Tārā (Fig. 40)

Provenance: Itkhauri, Hazaribagh District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 8 of Mahendrapāla

Inscription:

Not published.

Translation:

Not published.

64. Subject: Seated Buddha (Fig. 41)

Provenance: Guneri, Gaya District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 9 of Mahendrapāla

Inscription:

1. *Ye dharmmā hetu prabhavā hetun = teṣām ta-*
2. *-thāgato hy = avadat teṣāmca yo nirodho evam vā-*
3. *-dī mahāśramaṇaḥ | Samvat 9 Vaiśākha.*
4. *śudī 5 Śrī-Guṇa-*
5. *-carita Śrī-Mahīndrapā-*
6. *-ladevarājye devadha-*
7. *-rmmeyam ...*

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 64; rpt. p. 24

Remarks: I believe this is the same piece Cunningham published as being of the year 19. See Cunningham, ASR, III, p. 124, no. 14 and the references he provides. Also see D.R. Bhandarkar, *List*, no. 1646.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Samvat 9 Vaiśākha.*
2. *Śudi 5 Śrī-Guṇa.*
3. *-carita Śrī-Mahendrapā*
4. *-la-deva-rājye deva-dha*
5. *-rmm[o]yam Paramôpāsaka*
6. *-vanika Haridatta putra Śrī (?) pa ...*

Translation:

In the year 9 on the 5th day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, in the reign of the illustrious Mahendrapāla, at the illustrious Guṇacarita, the pious gift of Śrīpā (? 1a) son of the merchant Haridatta.

Reference: R.D. Banerji, "Pratīhāra Occupation," p. 110.

65. Subject: Sūrya (Fig. 42)

Provenance: Mahisantosh, West Dinajpur District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 15 of Mahendrapāla

Inscription:

1. *Om (I) Samvat 15 Mārgga-Śukla- Saptamyāḥ Śrī Mahendrapāladeva vijayāṇye Viṣṇu na-*
  2. *ndi naptā Gañjja nandi Sunū Lokanandinā Ādityabhāṭṭārkaḥ kārītaḥ (I)*
- Iti Khanaka Vidu (dyu) ta (II)*

Translation:

Hail (Ye Lord). On the seventh day of the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, i.e. Agrahāyana (appertaining to) the fifteenth victorious regnal year of (king) Śrī Mahendrapāladeva, (an) image of Lord Āditya (Sūrya) was carved or done by one Loka Nandi, grandson of Viṣṇu Nandi and son of Gañjja Nandi. Thus, (says) the engraver Vidyuta.

Reference: S.C. Mukherji, "Mahisantosh Sūrya," p. 44.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *[Siddham ||] Sasvat 15 Mārgga-śukla-saptamyām śrī-Mahēndhra(ndra)-pālādēva-vī(vi)-jaya-rājyē Viṣṇu-*
  2. *[na]ndi-naptā(ptrā) Gaṅganandi-sunū Lōkanandhi(ndi)nā Āditya-bhāṭṭārakaḥ kārīta iti*
- [||\*] Gana(na)ka-Vi[sal]jara*

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Mahisantosh Image Inscription," p. 208.

## CANDRA DYNASTY

66. Subject: Śiva Naṭarāja (Figs. 64-65)

Provenance: Bhārellā, Comilla District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 18 of Laḍahacandra

Inscription:

1. *Srimallayaha Chandra Devapadi | ya Bijaya Rajye Asta ... shna Chaturdasyam Tithau*
- Brhaspati Bare Pushya Nakashatre | Karmmantapala Sri |*
2. *Kushumadeva Suta Sri Bharudeva | Karita Sri Nartteswara Bhatta | ... Ashadha Dine 14*
- Khanitancha Ratokena Sarbbaksharah | Kashanitancha Madhusudanenti.*

Translation:

1. In the eighteenth year of the victorious reign of his glorious majesty Layahachandradeva, on Thursday, in the dark Chaturdasi Tithi and in the star Pushya.
2. Bharudeva, son of Kushumadeva Lord of Karmmanta made the Lord Nartteswara ... on the fourteenth day of Ashadhara. All the letters engraved by Ratoka. Sculptured by Madhusudana.

Reference: Nalini Kanta Bhattasali, "A Forgotten Kingdom of East Bengal," *JPASB* X,3 (Jan. 1914): 88-9.

-OR-

Inscription:

1. *Śrīmallayahacandra deva padī | ya vijaya rājye Astā ... shna Caturdaśyām Tithau Brhas-*
- pati vāre Puṣyā Nakṣatre | Karmmānta pāla Śrī*
2. *Kusumadeva suta Śrī Bhabudeva | karita Śrī Nartteśvara Bhaṭṭā ... Chanda gatyā*
- Āṣāḍha dine 14 || Khanitañca Ratokena sarvakṣarah.*
3. *Khanitañca madhusūdaneneti ||*

Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: Bhattasali, "Note on the Baḍkamta Nartteśvara Image," p. 17.

-OR-

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

Part I:

May success attend! In the eighteenth year of the victorious reign of His glorious Majesty Layahachandra-dēva, on Thursday in the dark Fourteenth Tithi, and under the star Pushya. Bhāvu-dēva, son of Kusuma-dēva, Lord of Karmānta, caused to be made the Lord Nartteśvara ... on the 14th day of Āṣāḍha (calculated) by the movement of the moon. And all the letters engraved by Ratōka.

Part II:

Also engraved by the illustrious Madhusūdana.

Reference: Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions," p. 352.

67. Subject: Sūrya (Fig. 66)

Provenance: Kulkuḍi, Faridpur District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 12 of Govindacandra

## Inscription:

1. *Śrī-takmi dinakārīn Bhaṭṭāraka[h\*]*
2. *Śrī-Gōvindachandradēva-pā-*
3. *dīya Samvat 12 Phālguna*
4. *dinē 19*

## Translation:

The (image of) the maker of the day, the God of the persons afflicted with the (skin disease) *takman*. The year 12 is of the exalted Gōvindachandradēva. The 19th day of Phālguna.

Reference: Bhattasali, "Two Inscriptions of Govindachandra," pp. 25-26.

Remarks: Bhattasali notes that *takman* is a disease mentioned in the *Atharva Veda* and that Sūrya is the reputed healer of leprosy and other skin diseases, probably including *takman*. However, he notes that D.C. Sircar reads the first part of the inscription as "Śrī-lakshmidina-kārīta-Bhaṭṭāraka" which he (Sircar) corrects to "Śrī-Lakshmidīna-kārīta-Bhaṭṭārakaḥ." Sircar says that "Bhaṭṭāraka" is not the name of the god, but he is called such (D.C. Sircar, *Bhāratavarsha*, Chaitra, 1348 B.S., p. 397, as cited by Bhattasali). Sircar, in another writing, ("A Note on the Bargaṅgā Stone Inscription," p. 63) says that Bhattasali's interpretation of the passage as "the god *dinakārīn* (the sun) who heals the skin-disease called *takman*" is both paleographically and grammatically "absurd" and that the passage should be read as "the Sun God (*bhaṭṭāraka*) caused to be made by Lakshmidīna." These comments refer to another article by Bhattasali cited by Sircar (*Bhāratavarsha*, Phālgun, 1348 B.S., pp. 269-271). Sircar again states his views in "Epigraphic Notes: Kulkuri and Betka Inscriptions," pp. 339-40.

## 68. Subject: Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva) (Fig. 67)

Provenance: Betkā (Pāikpārā), Dacca District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 23 of Govindachandra

## Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

## Translation:

The year 23 of (the reign of) the illustrious Govindachandra. (This image of) Lord Vāsudeva (is) caused to be made by Gaṅgādāsa, son of the late Pāradāsa (and) an inhabitant of Ralaja (?).

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Pāikpārā Vāsudeva," p. 416.

-OR-

## Inscription:

1. *Śrīmad-Gō || vindacha || ndrasya samvat 23*
2. *Bālajika-u || parata-Pā || radāsa-sutaḥ*
3. *Gaṅgadā || sa-kārīta-Vā || sudēva-*
4. *Bhaṭṭāraka[h\*]*

## Translation:

The 23rd year of the illustrious Gōvindachandra. (This image of) the Lord Vāsudēva was caused to be made by Gaṅgādāsa, the Bālajika, son of the deceased Pāradāsa.

Reference: Bhattasali, "Two Inscriptions of Govindachandra," p. 27.

Remarks: Bhattasali notes that D.C. Sircar reads "Bālajika" as "Rālajika" (*Bhāratavarsha*, Jyāishṭa, 1348 B.S. pp. 769ff. as cited by Bhattasali), and "thus missed a thousand year old important reference to this interesting caste of Bengal" (p. 27). Sircar later conceded that "Bālajika" is a possible reading, but questions Bhattasali's inference that "Bālajika" refers to the Bārajika caste of Bengal (D.C. Sircar, "Epigraphic Notes: Kulkuri and Betkā Inscriptions," p. 340.) See also Sircar reading of the inscription above.

## SENA DYNASTY

## 69. Subject: Manasā pillar (Fig. 81)

Provenance: Pāikore, Birbhum District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the reign of Vijayasena?

## Inscription:

*Rajena-Sri-Vijayase*

## Translation:

[Not given.]

Reference: ASIAR, 1921-22, p. 80. Also see N.G. Majumdar, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, p. 168.

## 70. Subject: Caṇḍī (Fig. 82)

Provenance: Rāmpāl, Dacca District, Bengal

Material: stone

Date: the year 3 of Lakṣmaṇasena or the year 3 La Sam?

## Inscription:

- A. 1. *Śrī-mal = Lakṣmaṇa-*
2. *senā-devasya sam 3*
- B. 1. *Maladei suta adhikṛta Damodre*
2. *-ṇa Śrī-Caṇḍīdevi samārvdhā tabhrādekana*
- C. 1. *Śrī-Nārāyaṇena*
2. *Pratiṣṭhit = etiḥ.*

## Translation:

[In] the year 3 of [the reign of] the illustrious Lakṣmaṇasenadeva [this image of] the goddess Caṇḍī was begun by the Judge Damodra (Damodara) ... [and] was dedicated by the illustrious Nārāyaṇa.

Reference: R.D. Banerji, "Lakṣmaṇasena," p. 290.

-OR-

## Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

## Translation:

The year 3 of the era of the illustrious Lakṣmaṇa-sēna-dēva. The (image of the) goddess Caṇḍī was begun by the Superintendent (*Adhikṛta*) Dāmōdara, son of Māladatta and was installed by his younger brother Nārāyaṇa (in the year) 4.

Reference: Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions," p. 362.

-OR-

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

1. In the year 3 of the illustrious Lakshmanasena.
- 2.-3. (The image of) Chaṇḍidevī, begun by the officer Dāmodara, son of Māladeī (Malladevī), is installed by his (younger) brother Nārāyaṇa.

*Reference:* N.G. Majumdar, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, p. 117.

## CEDI DYNASTY

71. *Subject:* Sculpted Pillar*Provenance:* Pāikore, Birbhum District, Bengal*Material:* stone*Date:* reign of Karna*Inscription:*

1. *Srī Srī Gaṇapati.*
- 2.
3. *Om deva-dvija-guru [bhajah]ntari ... daya bhaktinānta X*
4. *nehayan—X [sraddha] yā-smin karmmaṇi rājasrī-Karṇadeva*
5. *Om Svasti samriddha rājya-srī-Chedi r(ā)jya srī-Karṇa-deva[sya] jya nantarā kīrti prasāsti (?) Śrī viśva karmā charaṇa-prasādāt devī-murti nrimita X ptīya Śrī Kārtti ...*

*Translation:*

(The gist of the record seems to be that at the order of King Karnadeva of Chedi, an image of the goddess was made by a certain sculptor.)

*Reference:* ASIAR, 1921-22, pl. XXVIII A and p. 80.

## MISCELLANEOUS DATED PIECES

72. *Subject:* Slab with Buddha and two representations of Vajravārāhī or Mārīcī (Fig. 83)*Provenance:* Bodh Gayā, Gaya District, Bihar*Material:* stone*Date:* Jen-hsu year, Sung Dynasty (1021 A.D.). [See remarks.]*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

I Yūn shu, having come from my far distant fatherland to gaze upon the territory of Buddha; and then having seen with my eyes the miraculous footprint, was I not respectfully to offer my homage in glorification of my God? I therefore collected together what of money I could spare, and some 30 paces to the north of the Bodhidruma I raised a stone to the Ten Thousand Buddhas.

On three occasions Chiang Hsia-pias spent here the season of fast; but he had not the wherewithal to express his deepfelt gratitude and overflowing respect, and was forced to content himself with eulogistic utterances upon the countenance of the birthless intelligence. He said:—

O great Master, merciful to the people sympathising with all creatures.  
Although thou dost not manifest thyself, still thou art a most efficacious God.  
The herd of evil ones gaze up towards thee and recognize thy universal love.  
Increasing with the changing moons of the past two thousand years.

He also said:—

Oh, I could gaze on thy *lakshana* for ever.  
The majesty of thy countenance is rare indeed;  
The crown of thy head is of fine serpentine;  
Thy eyes like lotus flowers in a pool;  
The *Swastika* is written in gold upon thy breast;  
The down on thy shoulders is like threads of snow;  
Wonderful indeed is thy marvellous hand;  
The texture of thy robes is impermeable to dust and smoke.

And as Chiang Hsia-pias had hymned the shadow, I determined to pronounce a eulogium on the body, of which Buddha has three in all. And I began with the *Nirvāṇa-kāya* as follows:—

Deep is thy sympathy, genuine as the face of the moon:  
Thou hast saved mortals from out of the midst of fire:  
Thou handest down the traditions of the healing art:  
Thou stringest pearls in branching relationships.  
The Three Vehicles lead the way to wisdom.  
The five precepts brush away thy confusing dust of the world:  
Mental disturbance extinguishes the light of the intellect,  
But reaches not thy body, which is beyond the pale of matter.

I then proceeded to hymn the *Sambhōga-kāya*, as follows:

The myriad priests in the garden of *Jeta*,  
Released from mortality, pass from the thralldom of desire.  
The dust of this earth is wiped away:  
They long to enter into possession of the middle kingdom.  
The body of every Buddha possesses illimitable potentialities:  
His heart is dissevered from all ties:  
Cast for ever into the sea of the *Trilokya*  
Personal ambitions are entirely obliterated.

I finally went on to eulogise the *Dharma-kāya* as follows:—

To witness the source and wander over the sphere of the Law  
It was well to travel through dust and desert,  
Bright, bright, without beginning or end;  
Dark, dark, breaking the chain of *nidāna*:  
Dwelling on earth without becoming earthy:  
Abiding in heaven without undergoing change;  
In this eulogium I utter the deepest words of my heart,  
For I have at length met with the Immaculate Body.

And when I had eulogised the Triple Body, I desired also to eulogise the throne of each body, wherefore I proceeded to eulogise the shrine of *Nirmāṇa-kāya* as follows:—

There are wondrous footprints in the Five Heavens,  
Produced within the limits of the six cardinal points,

In depth descending to the bottom of the golden *chakkra*,  
 In height reaching to the surface of the earth;  
 Never do any mortal cares mingle there,  
 For how can fire and water blend?  
 Sometimes the armies of Mâitrêya and Mâra fight,  
 Until the latter are quelled by the roar of the lion.

I then eulogised the shrine of *Sambhōga-kāya*, as follows:—

This shrine towers above the limits of the *Trilō-kaya*;  
 Its shapely summit rests above the sky,  
 The *Kalpa* of fire exercises no influence over it;  
 On earth how should we seek to model its like?  
 The reputation of King Asoka extends afar:  
 He rested in wonderful perception of the doctrine.  
 A jewel among grains of sand,  
 Immortal, he will permeate the Great Void.

I then eulogised the shrine of the *Dharma-kāya* as follows:—

No beginning, no birth, no death;  
 All distracting influences at an end;  
 Steadily persuing the Five *Gati*;  
 Quietly entering into the *kalpa* of the Three Plagues  
 O supremest manifestation of wisdom,  
 Pure essence separated from the gross,  
 Even though passing through a hundred myriad *kalpas*,  
 Thou wouldst still be removed far from the dust of this earth.

Thus with the most fitting of my poor language did I strive to glorify the Great Doctrine, measuring, as it were, with the eye of a mosquito, the vast expanse of sky, perceiving not the magnitude of my task, but anxious only to give expression to my heart's burden. And now I take these hymns on the Triple Body, consummate in its excellence, and cause them to be engraved, the hope that prosperity and long life may thereby accrue to my honoured Prince, the Sovereign of the Great Sung Empire. For His Majesty is humbly desirous that the destiny of the Doctrine may resemble that of the Sacred Pool, from which nothing may be taken, and to which nothing may be added, the waves of which are liable neither to increase nor decrease; its blessedness that of the Celestial Hill, enduring in majestic loftiness. Still more does my Prince desire that in the future of this kingdom shrine may be added to shrine, and that in other lands and other ages name upon name may be enrolled among the legions of the faithful. Also that others may hymn the praise of the miraculous foot-print, and cause the same to be similarly voted down and put on record.

Recorded, and set up in token thereof, this Jen-hsu year of the reign of Divine, Favour of the Great Sung Empire (A.D. 1021).

In a postscript the priest Yun-shu adds the following:—

There went with me to worship in the land of Buddha the two priests *I-ching* and *I-lin*, from the monastery of *Established Doctrine* in the High Street of the Eastern Capital, who each took with him a gold embroidered *Kashāya* to be hung up in the shrine of Mahābodhi, and each set up his own memorial tablet in perpetual remembrance thereof.

Reference: Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, pp. 69-71.

Remarks: Regarding the date, Cunningham apparently was referring to Ch'ien Hsing, which was used in 1022, not 1021. A second Chinese inscription by I-ching and I-lin dedicates the gold-embroidered *kashāya* mentioned in Yun-shu's postscript. See Cunningham, *Mahābodhi*, p. 72.

73. Subject: Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara (Fig. 84)

Provenance: Giriyeḥ, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 42 of an unspecified era

Inscription:

1. om (by symbol) *deva(ya)-dha[r]moyam(m)* | *Dānapati-māthūra (thura)*.
2. *vaṇik sādhu(dhu) Śrīkara sādhu(dhu) Dā-*
3. *gonmatasya saṁ 42 [||]*

Translation:

In the year 42, this pious gift was made by the donors, sādhu Śrīkara and sādhu Dāgonmata, merchants of Mathurā.

Reference: P. Banerjee, "Two Mediaeval Inscriptions," p. 107.

Remarks: Although the era is unspecified, the piece, on a stylistic basis, belongs to the late Pāla period. It is possible that the date refers to the reign of Rāmapāla since he is the only one of the later rulers who reigned for at least forty-two years.

74. Subject: Figure seated on throne

Provenance: Tetrāwān, Patna District, Bihar

Material: stone

Date: the year 892

Inscription:

Romanized transliteration not given.

Translation:

A gift to the gods by Sai Jena—Sambat 892—5th day—(i.e., A.D. 837).

Reference: Broadley, "Buddhist Remains," p. 281.

Remarks: The inscription was read by Rām K. Bhandarkar.

75. Subject: Durgā

Provenance: Khojpur, Darbhanga District, Bengal

Material: stone?

Date: 147 La Saṁ

Inscription:

[Gives only second line of first half of inscription.] *La-saṁ 147 Āshāḍha-sudi 12 Śukre*

Translation:

[Image was installed on Friday, the twelfth of the bright fortnight of the month of Āshāḍha in the year 147 of the Lakshmaṇasena-Saṁvat.]

Reference: D.C. Sircar, "Some Inscriptions from Bihar," p. 11.



-AND-

*Inscription:**Left Half:*

1. [Symbol.] *Rakaperī-grāmo Māṇḍavika-śrī-Bhondeśvaraḥ*
2. *La-Sarī 147 Āṣāḍha-sudī 12 Śukre*

*Right Half:*

1. ... *racala(?) śrī-Madana-sū-*
2. *nunā śrī-Sūryakareṇa pratimā ghaṭanā ||*

*Translation:*

Summarized as in above publication by Sircar.

*Reference:* Dinesh Chandra Sircar, *Some Epigraphical Records of the Medieval Period from Eastern India*, New Delhi: Abhinav, 1979, pp. 42-43.

*Remarks:* Sircar calculates the date of the image to be Friday, June 18, 1255 A.D.

76. *Subject:* Tārā (Fig. 85)

*Provenance:* Udaypur Hill, Comilla District, Bengal

*Material:* stone

*Date:* Śaka 1308 (1386 A.D.)

*Inscription:*

Romanized transliteration not given.

*Translation:*

[Not given.]

*Reference:* N.N. Law, "Some Images and Traces," p. 334.

77. *Subject:* Pārvatī (Fig. 86)

*Provenance:* Chāpāilā, Rajshahi District, Bengal

*Material:* stone

*Date:* Śaka 1579 (1657 A.D.)

*Inscription:*

*Śubhamastul Śrīgaṅgādāsa Śarmaṇaḥ/ Śakābdā 1579*

*Translation:*

Be it auspicious. Of (this image belongs to) Śrī Gaṅgādāsa Śarmā. Dated 1579 of the Śaka era.

*Reference:* Dr. Mukhlesur Rahman, Director, Varendra Research Museum (personal communication).

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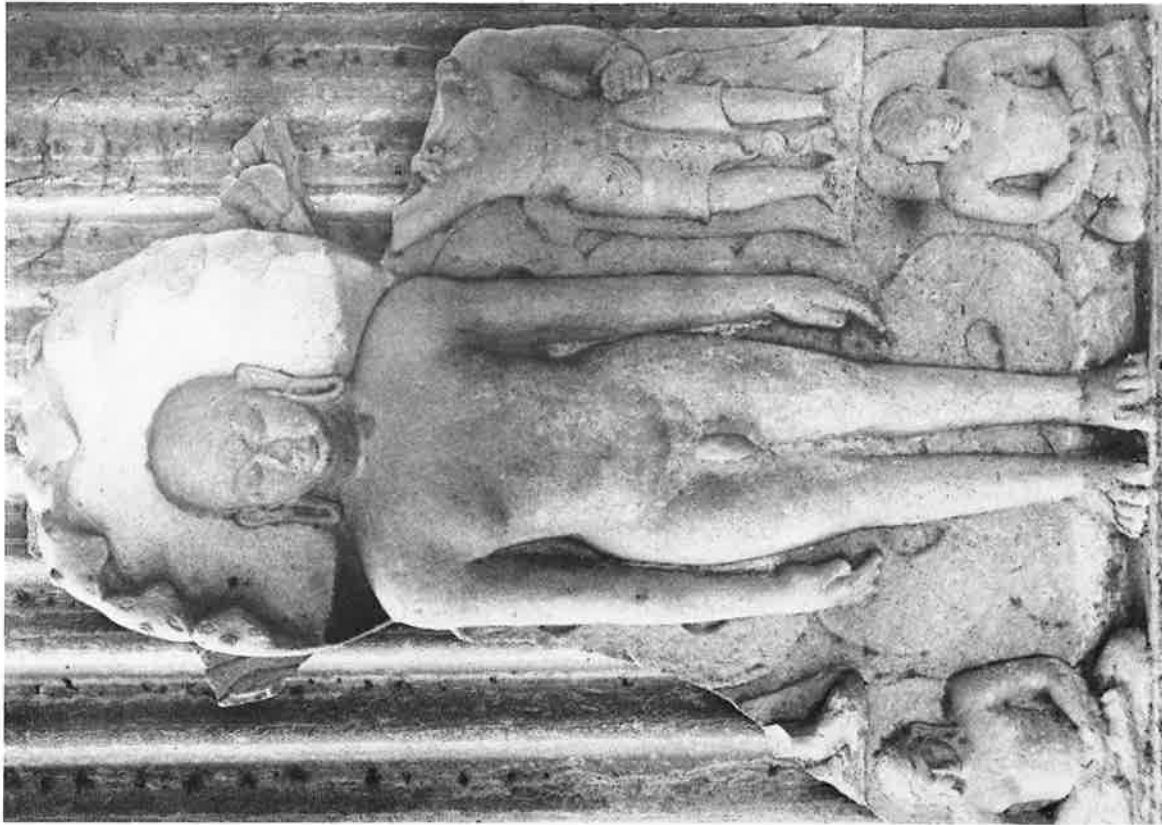
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2. Pārśvanātha. Mahābīr Ghāt, Patna, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 4th century.



3. Viṣṇu. Nārhaṭṭa, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 4th or early 5th century.



4. Nṛsiṃha. Shāhkuṇḍ, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 4th or early 5th century.



5. Buddha, Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Year 64, Ca. 4th century.



6. Buddha, Bodh Gayā vicinity, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. first half 5th century.



7. Buddha, Bodh Gayā vicinity, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. mid-to-late 5th century.



8. Buddha, Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. 7th century.



9. Buddha, Bihārail, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal, Ca. last quarter 5th century.



10. Buddha, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar, Ca. first half 5th century.





11. Bodhisattva. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 6th century.



12. Siddhaikavira Mañjuśrī. Provenance unknown. Ca. mid-to-late 6th or early 7th century.



13. Buddha head. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 6th century.



14. Buddha. Telhāra, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 6th or 7th century.



15. Buddha. Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



16. Buddha. Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



17. Buddha, Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th or early 8th century.



18. *Nāgini*. Maṇiyār Maṭh, Rājgir, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 6th or early 7th century.



19. Dīpaṅkara Buddha. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 6th or early 7th century.



20. Revanta, Pachār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 6th century.



23. Sūrya. Muṇḍeśvarī, Shahabad Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



22. Kārtikeya. Muṇḍeśvarī, Shahabad Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



21. Kārtikeya. Muṇḍeśvarī, Shahabad Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.





24. Stone reliefs. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



25. Kumāri. Saraikela, Singhbhum Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th or 8th century.



26. Sarvvāpī. Deulbāḍī, Comilla Dt., Bengal. Gilded by Queen Prabhāvatī of the Khadga dynasty. Ca. late 7th or early 8th century.

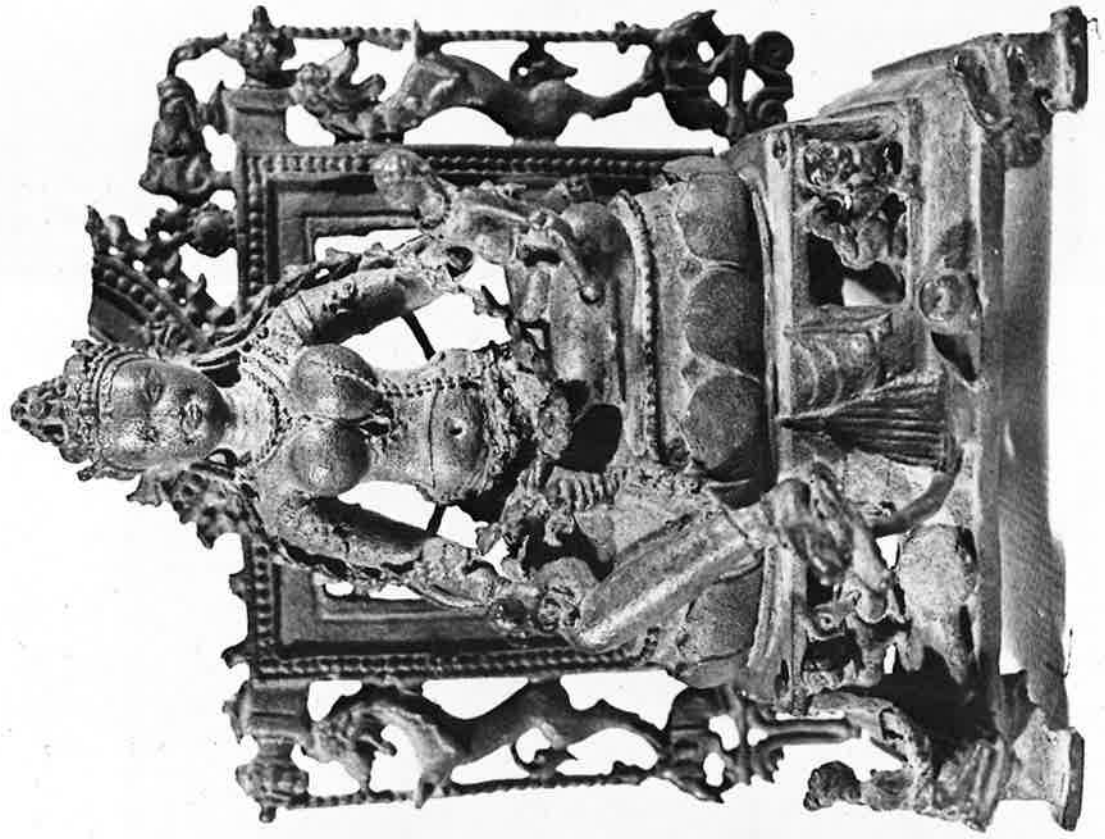


27. Lintel with Sūrya, Lakulīṣa, Viṣṇu. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 26th year of Dharmapāla. Ca. 800 ± 10 years.





28. Pañcika. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. 3rd year of Devapāla. Ca. second decade 9th century.



29. Hārīti. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Reign of Devapāla. Ca. second quarter 9th century.



30. Balarāma. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Reign of Devapāla? Ca. second quarter 9th century.



31. Balarāma. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 9th year of Devapāla. Ca. second quarter 9th century.



32. Viṣṇu. Bengal. Reign of Devapāla. Ca. second quarter 9th century.



33. Tārā. Hilsa, Patna Dt., Bihar. 25th or 35th year of Devapāla. Ca. mid-9th century.



34. Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa. Uddanāpura (Bihār Sharīf), Patna Dt., Bihar. 3rd or 2nd year of Śūrapāla (I). Ca. mid-9th century.



35. Buddha Taming Nālagiri. Uddanāpura (Bihār Sharīf), Patna Dt., Bihar. 3rd or 2nd year of Śūrapāla (I). Ca. mid-9th century.



36. *Dvādaśāditya*. Rājauṇā or Valgūdar, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. 5th year of Śūrapāla (I). Ca. mid-9th century.



37. Miracle of Śrāvastī. Rohoi, Patna Dt., Bihar. 12th or 13th year of Vigrahapāla (I). Ca. mid-9th century.



38. Buddha Taming Nālagiri. Bihar (city? state?), 4th year of Mahendrapāla. Ca. late 9th century.





39. Buddha. Bihār Sharīf vicinity, Patna Dt., Bihar. 4th year of Mahendrapāla. Ca. late 9th century.



40. Tārā. Itkhauri, Hazaribagh Dt., Bihar. 8th year of Mahendrapāla. Ca. late 9th century.



41. Buddha. Guneri, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 9th year of Mahendrapāla. Ca. late 9th century.



42. Sūrya. Mahisantosh, West Dinajpur Dt., Bengal. 15th year of Mahendrapāla. Ca. early 10th century.



43. Pārvatī. Uddanāpura (Bihār Sharīf), Patna Dt., Bihar. 54th year of Nārāyaṇapāla. Ca. early 10th century.



44. Pedestal with nāgas. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 28th year of Rājyapāla. Ca. mid-10th century.



45. Vasudhārā. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 31st or 32nd year of Rājyapāla, Ca. mid-10th century.



46. Vasudhārā. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 31st or 32nd year of Rājyapāla. Ca. mid-10th century.



47. Umā-Maheśvara. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 31st or 32nd year of Rājyapāla. Ca. mid-10th century.



48. Balarāma. Provenance unknown. 37th year of Rājyapāla. Ca. mid-10th century.



50. Gaṇeśa. Mandhuk, Comilla Dt., Bengal. 1st year of Gopāla (II). Ca. mid-10th century.



49. Vāgīśvarī. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. 1st year of Gopāla (II). Ca. mid-10th century.





51. Pedestal. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Reign of Gopāla (II). Ca. mid-10th century.



52. Viṣṇu. Bāghāūrā, Comilla Dt., Bengal. 3rd year of Mahipāla (I). Ca. late 10th century.



53. Gaṇeśa (Vināyaka). Nārāyaṇpur, Comilla Dt., Bengal. 4th year of Mahipāla (I). Ca. late 10th century.



54. Life Scenes of Buddha. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 10th or 11th year of Mahipāla (I). Ca. late 10th or early 11th century.





57. Door frame fragments, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. 11th year of Mahīpāla (I). Ca. late 10th or early 11th century.



56. Door frame fragment, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. 11th year of Mahīpāla (I). Ca. late 10th or early 11th century.



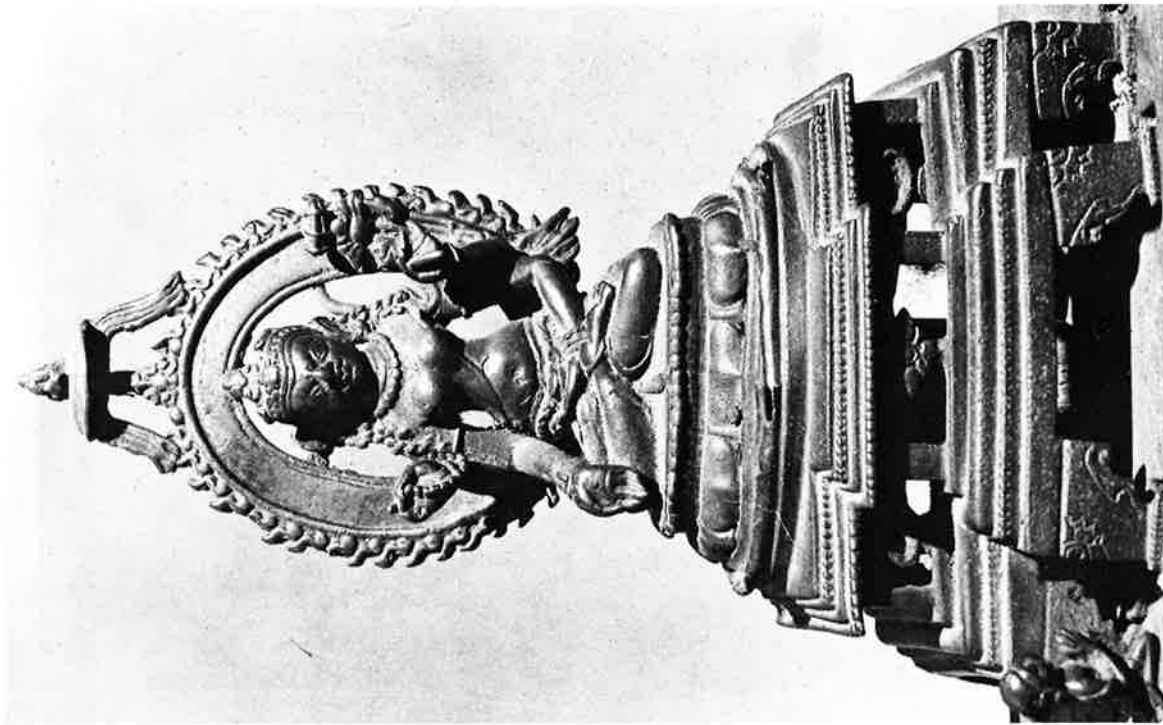
55. Door frame fragment, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. 11th year of Mahīpāla (I). Ca. late 10th or early 11th century.



58. Legs and pedestal of a Buddha image. Sārnāth, U.P. [Vikrama] *Samvat* 1083; reign of Mahīpāla (I). 1026 A.D.



59. *Nāgas*, Tetrāwān or Ghorakatore, Patna Dt., Bihar. Reign of Mahīpāla (I)? Ca. late 10th or early 11th century.



61. Cuṇḍā. Kurkiḥār, Gaya Dt., Bihar, 31st or 21st year of Mahipāla (I). Ca. first quarter 11th century.



60. Viṣṇu. Nimdighi, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal, 23rd year of Mahipāla (I). Ca. first quarter 11th century.



62. Balarāma, Ekānamśa and Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva. Imādpur, Muzaffarpur Dt., Bihar, 48th year of Mahipāla (I). Ca. third or fourth decade 11th century.



63. Gaṇeśa, Brahmāṇī, Kumārī, Vaiṣṇavī and Kubera. Imādpur, Muzaffarpur Dt., Bihar, 48th year of Mahipāla (I). Ca. third or fourth decade 11th century.





65. Śiva Natarāja (upper). Bhārellā, Comilla Dt., Bengal. 18th year of Laḍahacandra. Ca. early 11th century.



64. Śiva Natarāja (lower). Bhārellā, Comilla Dt., Bengal. 18th year of Laḍahacandra. Ca. early 11th century.



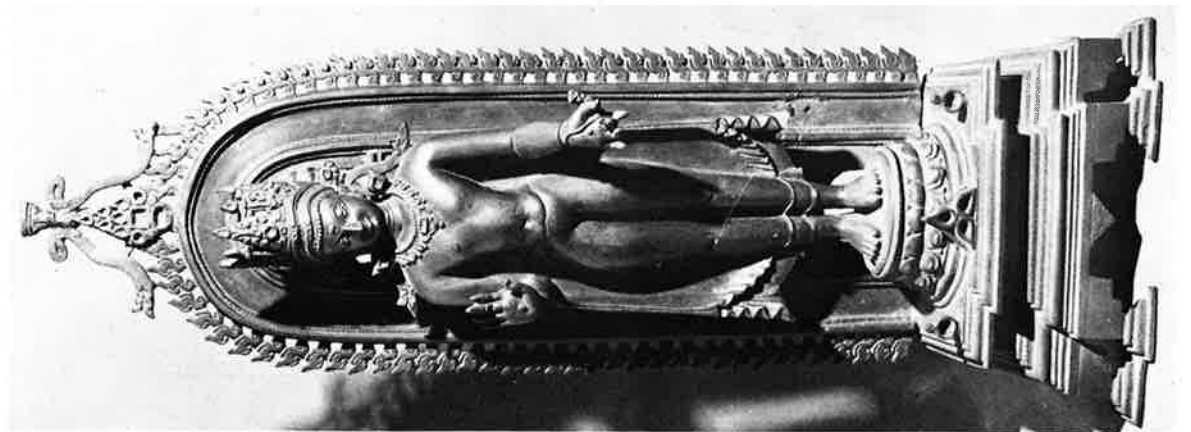
67. Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva). Betkā (Pāikpārā), Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. 23rd year of Govindacandra. Ca. first third to first half 11th century.



66. Sūrya. Kulkudī, Faridpur Dt., Bengal. 12th year of Govindacandra. Ca. first third to first half 11th century.



68. Viṣṇu. Mandoil, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. 4th year of Vīgrahapāla (III). Ca. third quarter 11th century.



69. Crowned Buddha. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 3rd year of Vīgrahapāla (III). Ca. third quarter 11th century.



70. Crowned Buddha. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 19th year of Vīgrahapāla (III). Ca. third quarter 11th century.



71. Crowned Buddha. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 19th year of Vīgrahapāla (III). Ca. third quarter 11th century.





72. Detail of Fig. 71; profile.



74. Tārā. Tetrāvāṇ, Patna Dt., Bihar. 2nd or 3rd year of Rāmapāla. Ca. last quarter 11th century.

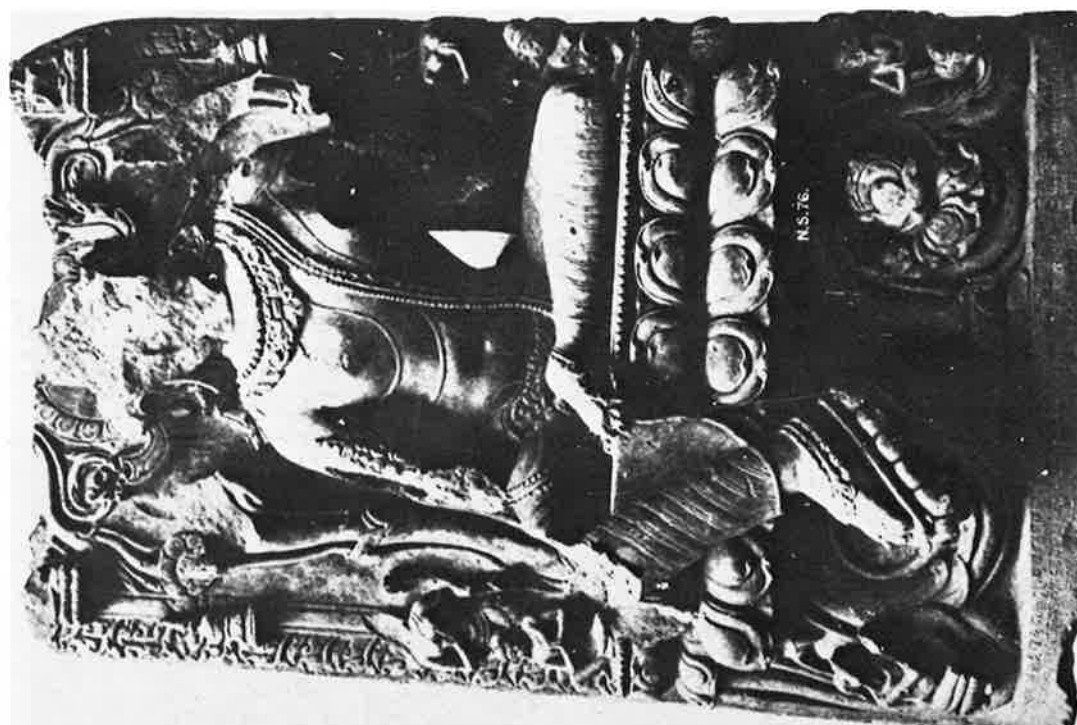


73. Pedestal of a figure. Naulāgarh, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. 24th year of Vīgrahapāla (III). Ca. third quarter 11th century.





76. Avalokiteśvara. Kiul, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. Reign of Gopāla (III)?  
Ca. second quarter 12th century.



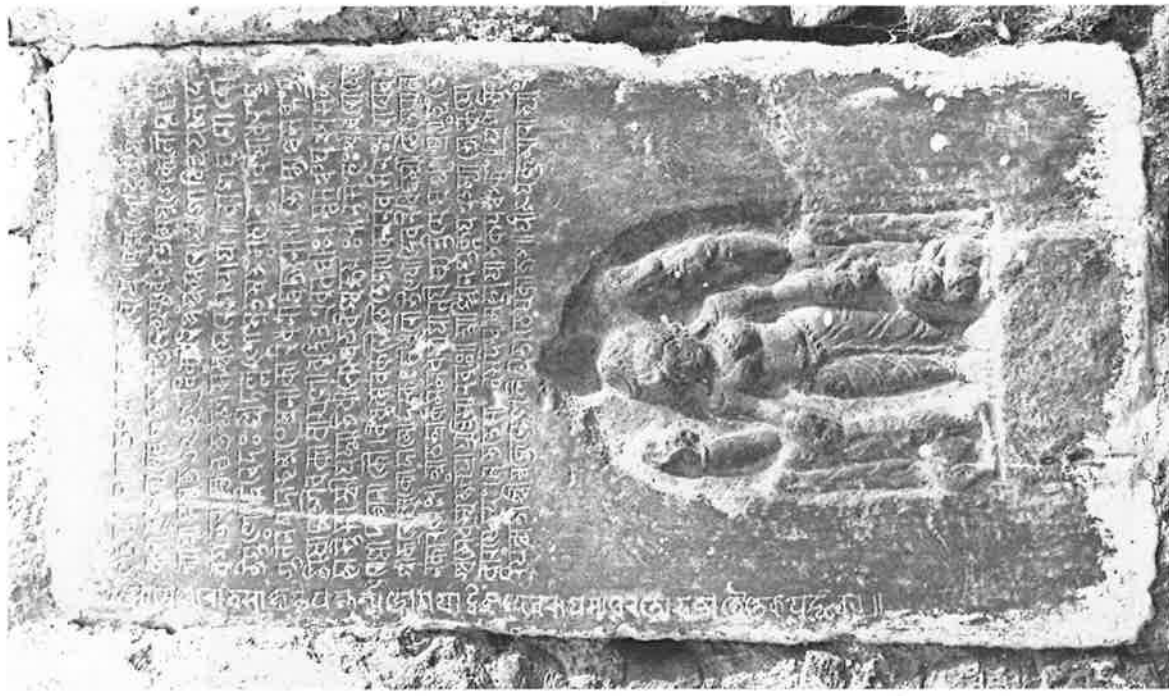
75. Khasarpana Avalokiteśvara. Chandimau, Patna Dt., Bihar. 42nd year of  
Rāmapāla. Ca. first quarter 12th century.



77. Sadāśiva. Rajibpur, Dinajpur Dt., Bengal. 14th year of Gopāla (III). Ca. second quarter 12th century.



78. Pārvaī with Kārtikeya. Bihār Hill, Patna Dt., Bihar. 3rd year of Madanapāla. 1146-47 A.D.



79. Inscribed slab with figure of Pārvaī. Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Vikrama *Samvat* 1232 and 14th year of Govindapāla, 1175 A.D.



80. Pūrṇeśvarī (or Punyeśvarī). Jaynagar, Monghyr Dt., Bihar, 35th year of Palapāla. Ca. last quarter 12th century.



81. Manasā pillar. Paikore, Birbhum Dt., Bengal. Reign of Vijayasena? Ca. late 11th or first half 12th century.



82. Caṇḍī, Rānpāl, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal, 3rd year of reign of Lakṣmanasena or 3rd year of Lakṣmanasena *Samvat*? Ca. 1181-82; or ca. 1111 or 1122-23.





83. Slab with Buddha and two depictions of Vajravārāhī (or Mārīcī?), Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. 1021 A.D. (calculated from the Chinese).



84. Khasarapaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Giriyeś, Patna Dt., Bihar. Year 42. Ca. first quarter 12th century.



85. Tārā, Udaypur Hill, Comilla Dt., Bengal. Śaka 1308? 1386 A.D.?



86. Pārvatī, Chāpāilā, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Śaka 1579, 1657 A.D.



87. Viṣṇu. Masārḥ, Shahabad Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



88. Sūrya. Deo-Baruṇārḥ, Shahabad Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



89. Umā-Maheśvara. Deo-Baruṇārk, Shahabad Dt., Bihar, Ca. 9th or early 10th century.



90. Umā-Maheśvara. Deo-Baruṇārk, Shahabad Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 10th or early 11th century.



91. Viṣṇu images. Deo-Markaṇḍeya, Shahabad Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 8th-early 9th century.



92. Varāha. Āpsādh, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th century.



93. Durgā Mahiṣāsūramardīnī. Āpsādh, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th century.



94. Sūrya. Āpsādh, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th century.





95. Viṣṇu, Āpsādh, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 7th century.



96. Sūrya, Surajaṅka or Surjan Giri, Barābar Hills, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 7th century.



99. Kalyāṇasundaramūrti (Marriage of Śiva), Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. mid-to-late 9th century.



100. Viṣṇu, Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 8th or early 9th century.



97. Viṣṇu, Surajaṅka or Surjan Giri, Barābar Hills, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. 9th century.



98. Varāha, Surajaṅka or Surjan Giri, Barābar Hills, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 10th-early 11th century.



101. Viṣṇu, Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. early 9th century.



102. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara, Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. mid-9th century.

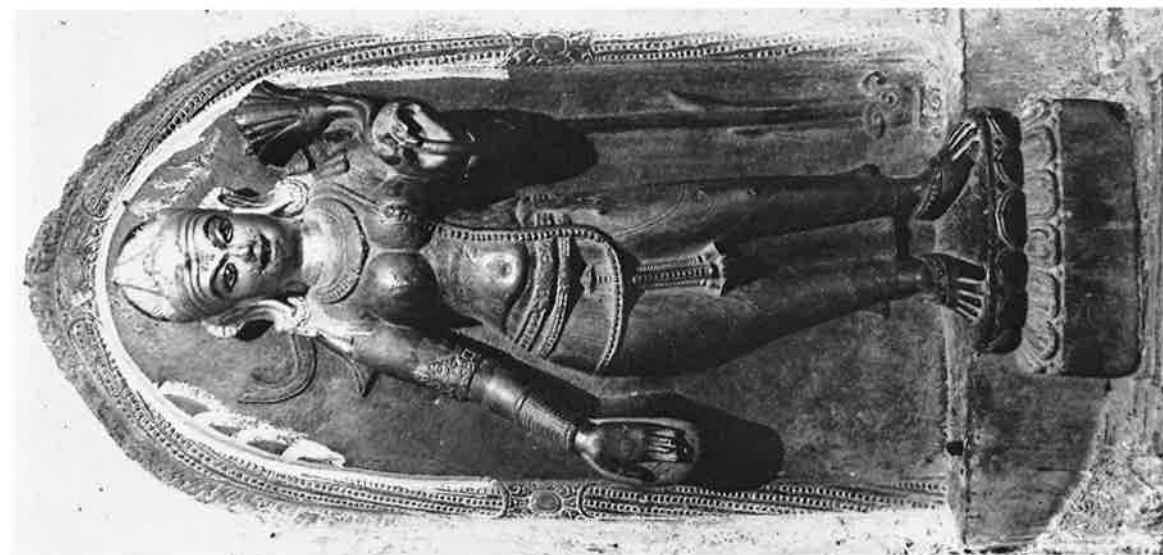




103. Buddha. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 9th century.



104. Avalokiteśvara. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



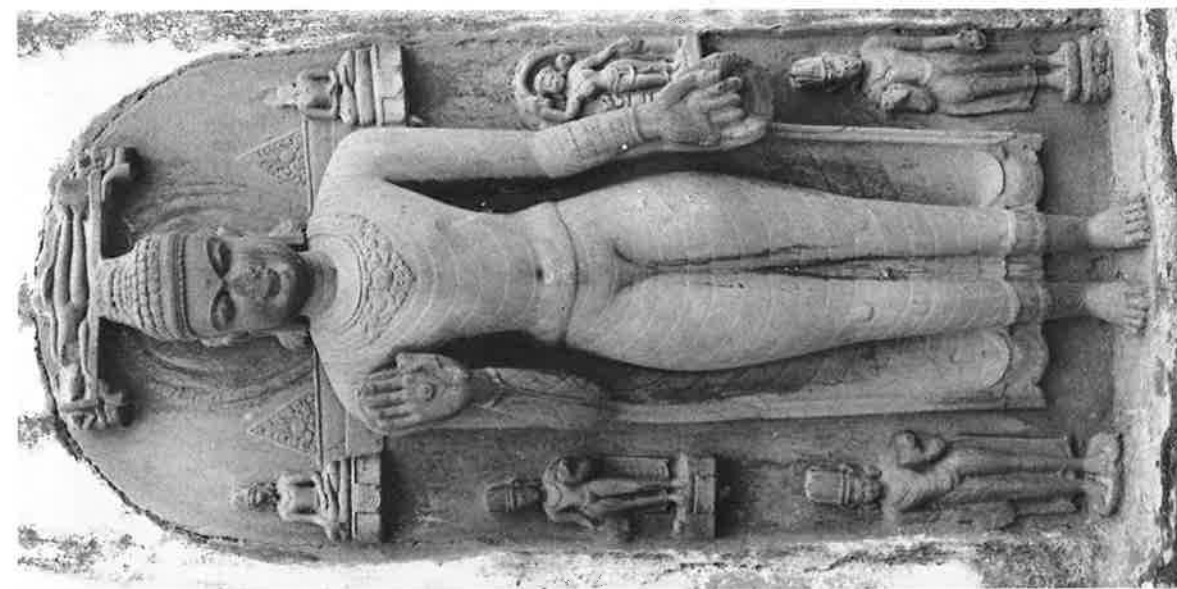
105. Tārā. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



106. Buddha. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



107. Crowned Buddha. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



108. Diademed Buddha with Life Scenes. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.





110. Trailokavijaya. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



109. Crowned Buddha. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



111. Bodhisattva (Mañjuśrī?), with his *prajñā*. Bodh Gayā, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th-12th century.



112. Amoghapāśa Avalokiteśvara. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 9th century.



113. Tārā. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 9th century.



114. Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 9th century.



115. Amoghapaśa Avalokiteśvara. Kurkihar, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



116. Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa. Kurkihar, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



117. Buddha. Kurkihar, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.

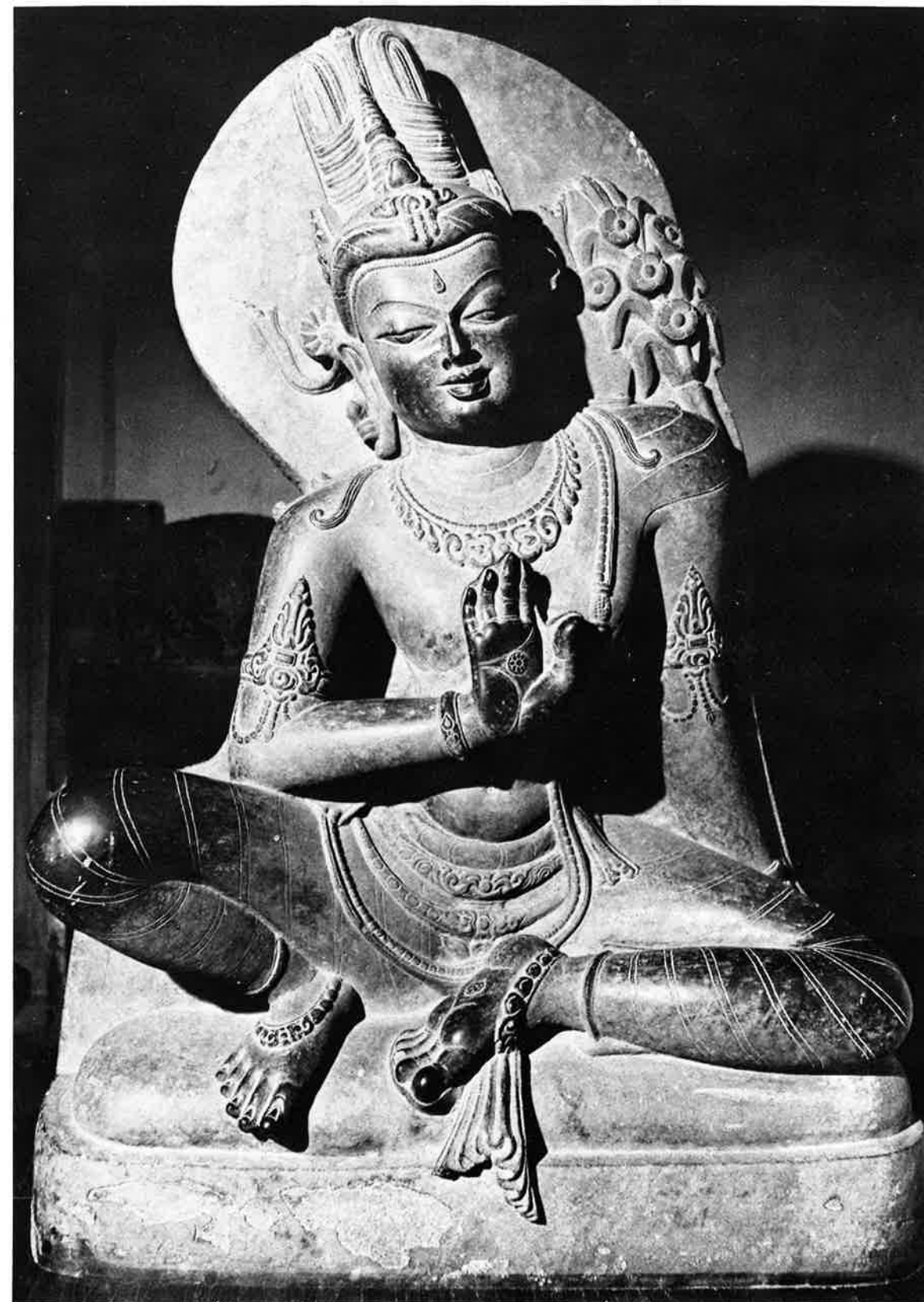


118. Buddha. Guneri, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.





119. Mañjuśrī Kumāra, Guneri, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. 10th century.



120. Maitreya. Hasra Kol or Viṣṇupur, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.





121. Buddha. Hasra Kol or Viṣṇupur, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. 10th century.



122. Avalokiteśvara. Hasra Kol or Viṣṇupur, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



123. Bodhisattva. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar, Ca. 7th century.



124. Mañjuśrī Kumāra. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



125. Vajrasārada. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.



126. Sūrya. Bargaon village, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 7th century.

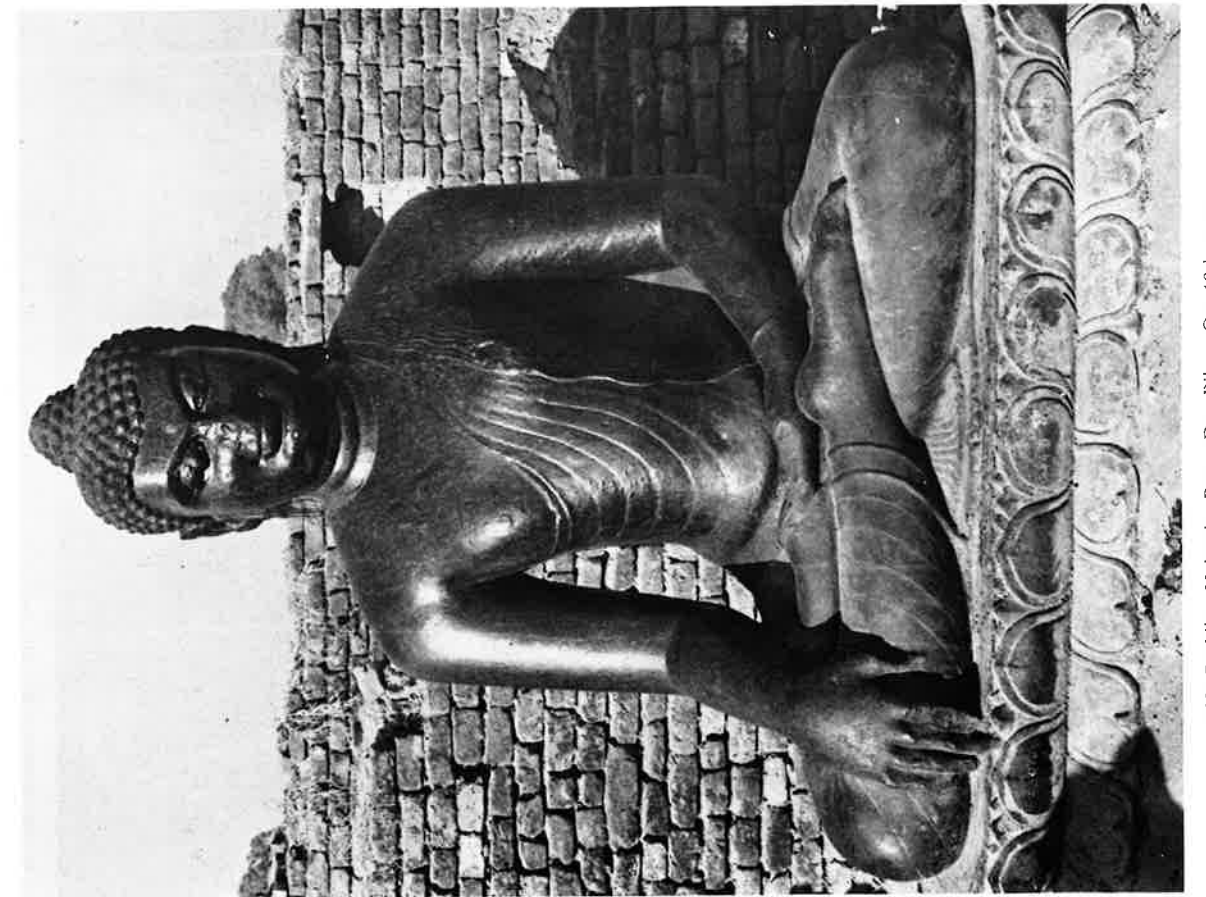


127. Avalokiteśvara. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. mid-9th century.





128. Birth of Buddha, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar, Ca. mid-9th century.



129. Buddha, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar, Ca. 10th century.



130. Buddha, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar, Ca. 10th century.



131. Life Scenes of Buddha. Jagtīspur, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 10th century.



132. Buddha (Maitreya?), Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



133. Diademed Buddha. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. mid-to-late 10th century.



134. Crowned Buddha and Life Scenes. Bargaon village, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.





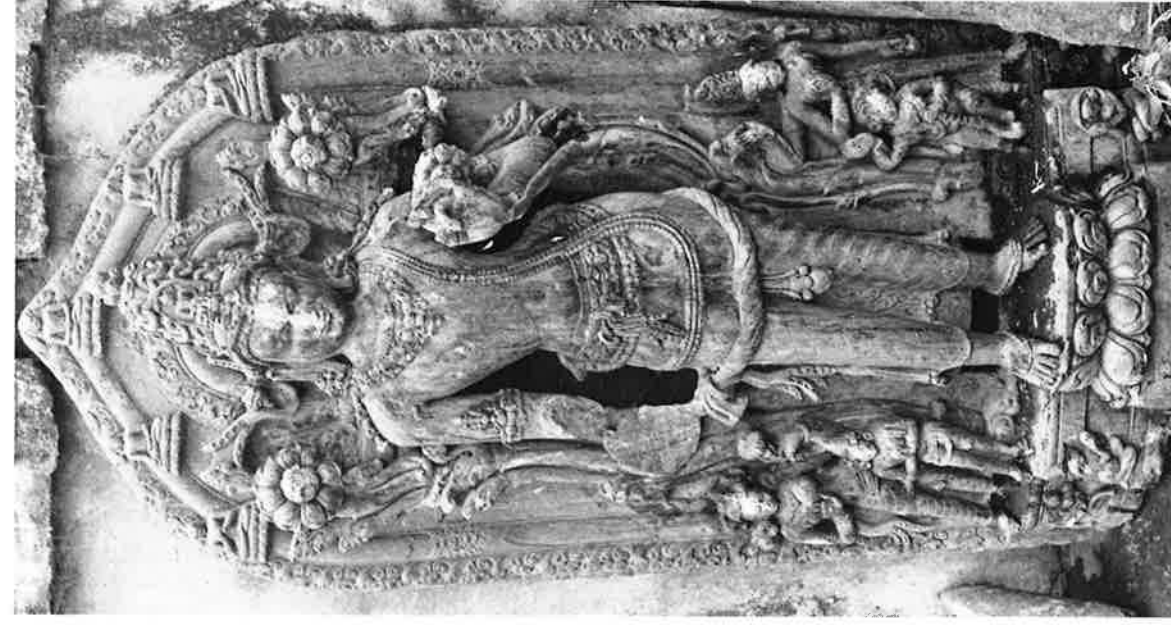
135. Crowned Buddha? (head missing). Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 11th century.



136. Buddha. Surājpur village, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 11th century.



137. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 11th century.



138. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Surājpur village, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



139. Buddha. Hassanpur, Rājgir, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



140. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Ghosrāwān, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 9th century.



141. Buddha. Tetrāwān, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 9th century.



142. Viṣṇu. Dāpṭhū, Patna-Gaya border area, Bihar. Ca. late 7th century.



144. Śiva Natarāja. Dāpṭhū, Patna-Gaya border area, Bihar. Ca. late 9th-10th century.



143. Viṣṇu. Dāpṭhū, Patna-Gaya border area, Bihar. Ca. late 9th-early 10th century.





146. Sūrya. Lakhisarai, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 8th century.



145. Umā-Maheśvara. Kashtaharini Ghāt, Monghyr fort, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 8th century.



147. Viṣṇu. Singhrikee, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. Ca. early 9th century.



148. Sūrya. Monghyr Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 9th century.



149. Buddha. Lakhisarai, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



150. Bhairava? Abhāyapur, Monghyr Dt., Bihar. Ca. 12th century.



151. Crowned Buddha. Antichak, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th-11th century.



152. Crowned Buddha with Life Scenes. Antichak, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



153. Crowned Buddha with Life Scenes. Antichak, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.





154. Buddha head. Sultāngaṇj, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. 6th-7th century.



155. Simhanāda Avalokiteśvara. Sultāngaṇj, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 11th-12th century.



156. Ratnasambhava. Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. 11th century.



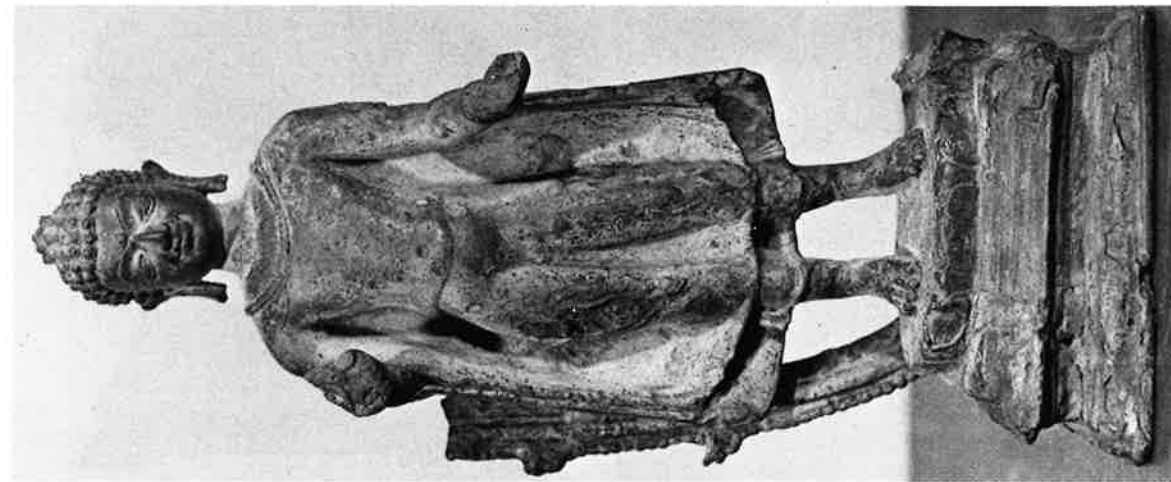
157. Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara with Saḍakṣarī Mahāvīdyā and Saḍakṣarī Maṇidhara. Colgong, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 11th-12th century.



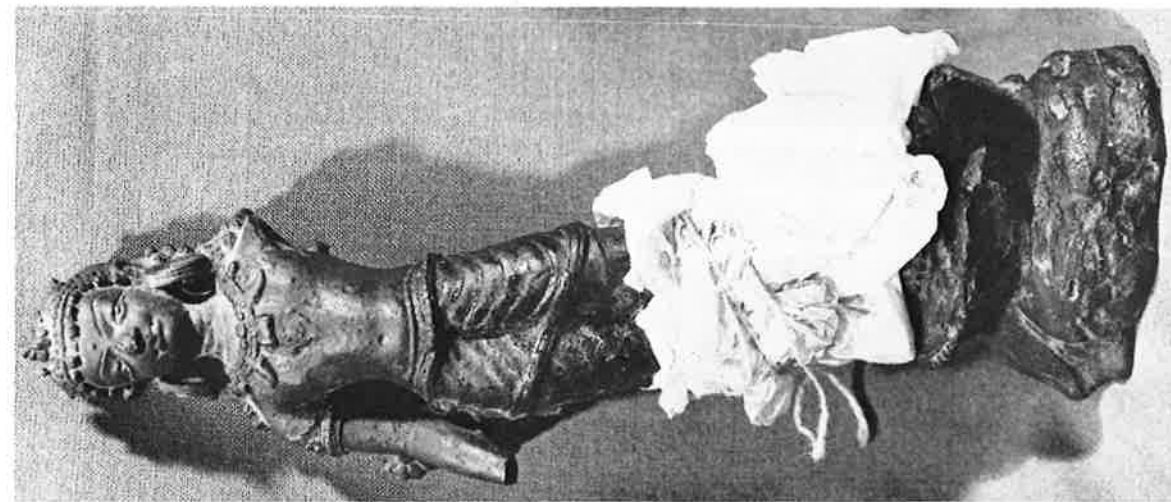
158, Viṣṇu. Eksari, Saran Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 10th or 11th century.



159, Viṣṇu. Silour, Saran Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 10th or 11th century.



160, Buddha. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.



161, Mañjuśrī Kumāra. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.



162, Avalokiteśvara. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar, Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.





163. Buddha. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th-8th century.



164. Avalokiteśvara. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.



167. Buddha. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.



168. Buddha. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.



165. Avalokiteśvara. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.



166. Bodhisattva. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.



169. Cuṇḍā. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 9th century.



170. Trailokavijaya. Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 10th century.



171. Mahāvairocana, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



172. Buddha, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



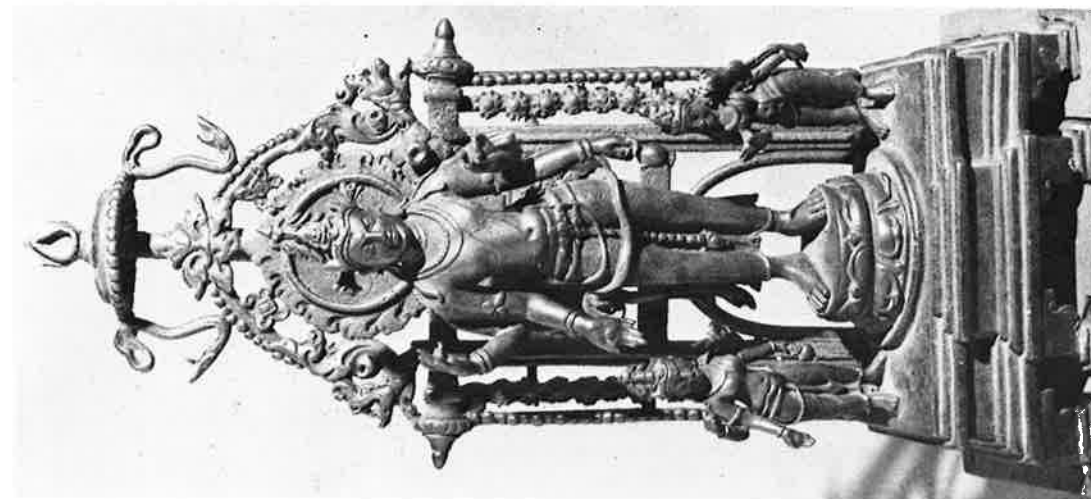
173. Buddha, Nālandā, Patna Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



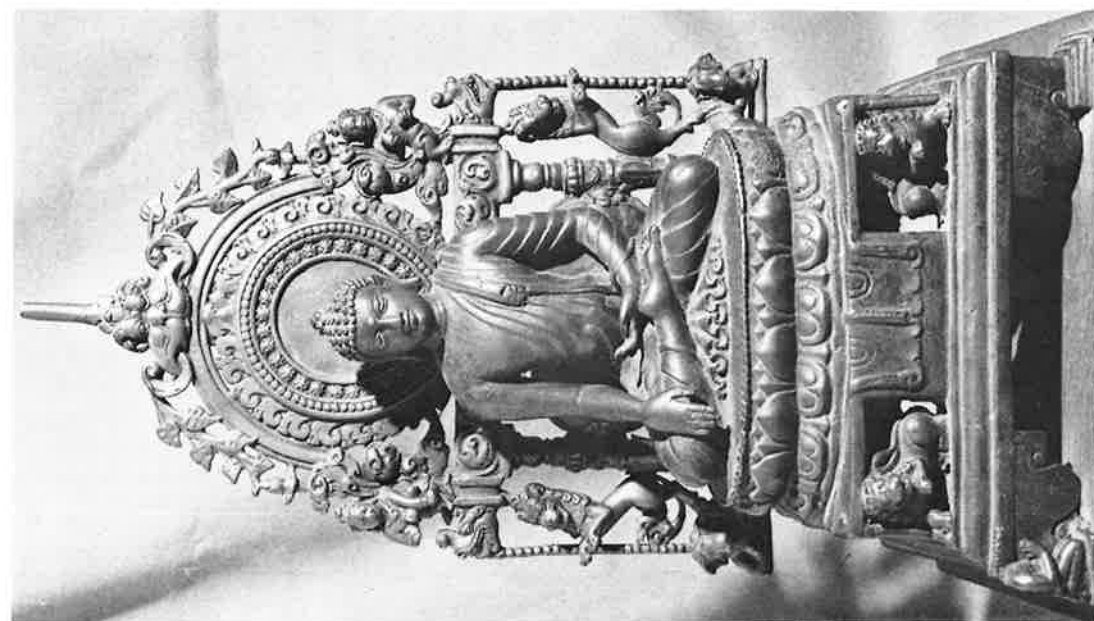
174. Avalokiteśvara. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 7th-8th century.



175. Buddha, Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.



178. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. early-to-mid-10th century.

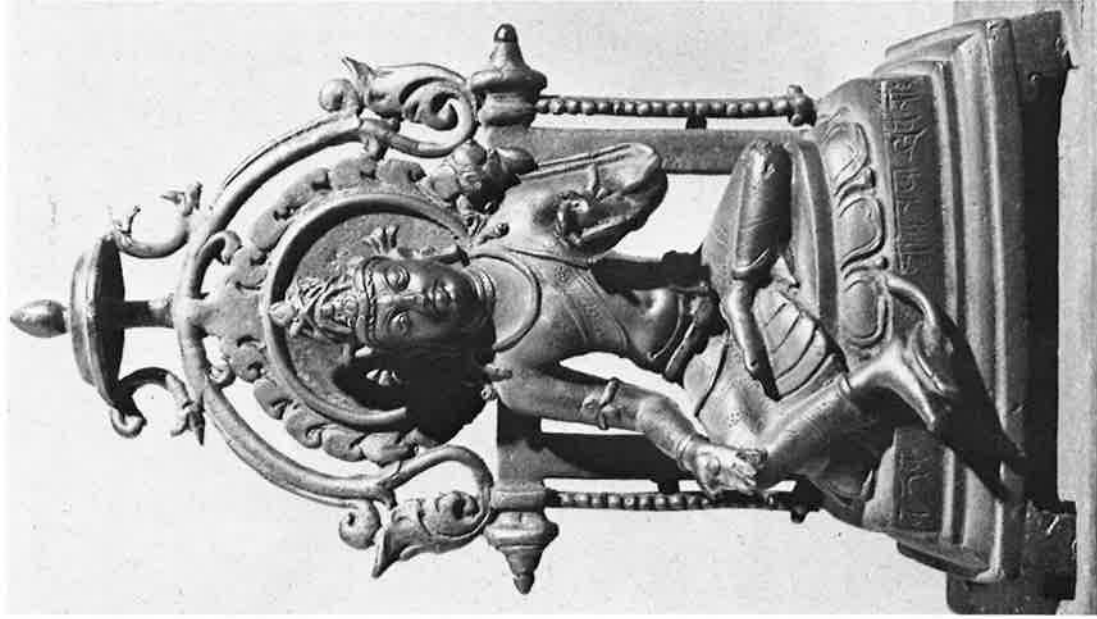


177. Buddha, Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 9th or early 10th century.



176. Mañjuśrī Kumāra, Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 9th-early 10th century.





179. Avalokiteśvara. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. mid-10th century.



180. Crowned Buddha. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. mid-10th century.



181. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. mid-10th century.



182. Tārā. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. mid-10th century.



183. Crowned Buddha. Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. mid-10th century.



184. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara.  
Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. late 10th-early 11th century.



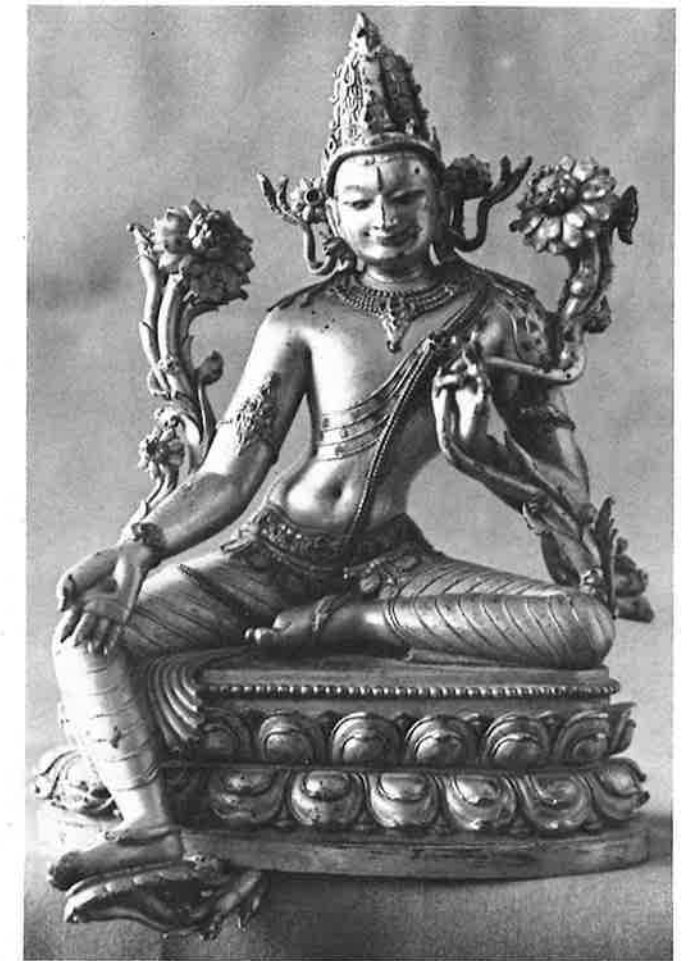
185. Crowned Buddha, Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar,  
Ca. 12th century.



186. Buddha, Kurkihār, Gaya Dt.,  
Bihar, Ca. 12th century.



188. Tārā, Kurkihār, Gaya  
Dt., Bihar. Ca. 11th century.



187. Avalokiteśvara, Kurkihār, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. 12th century.

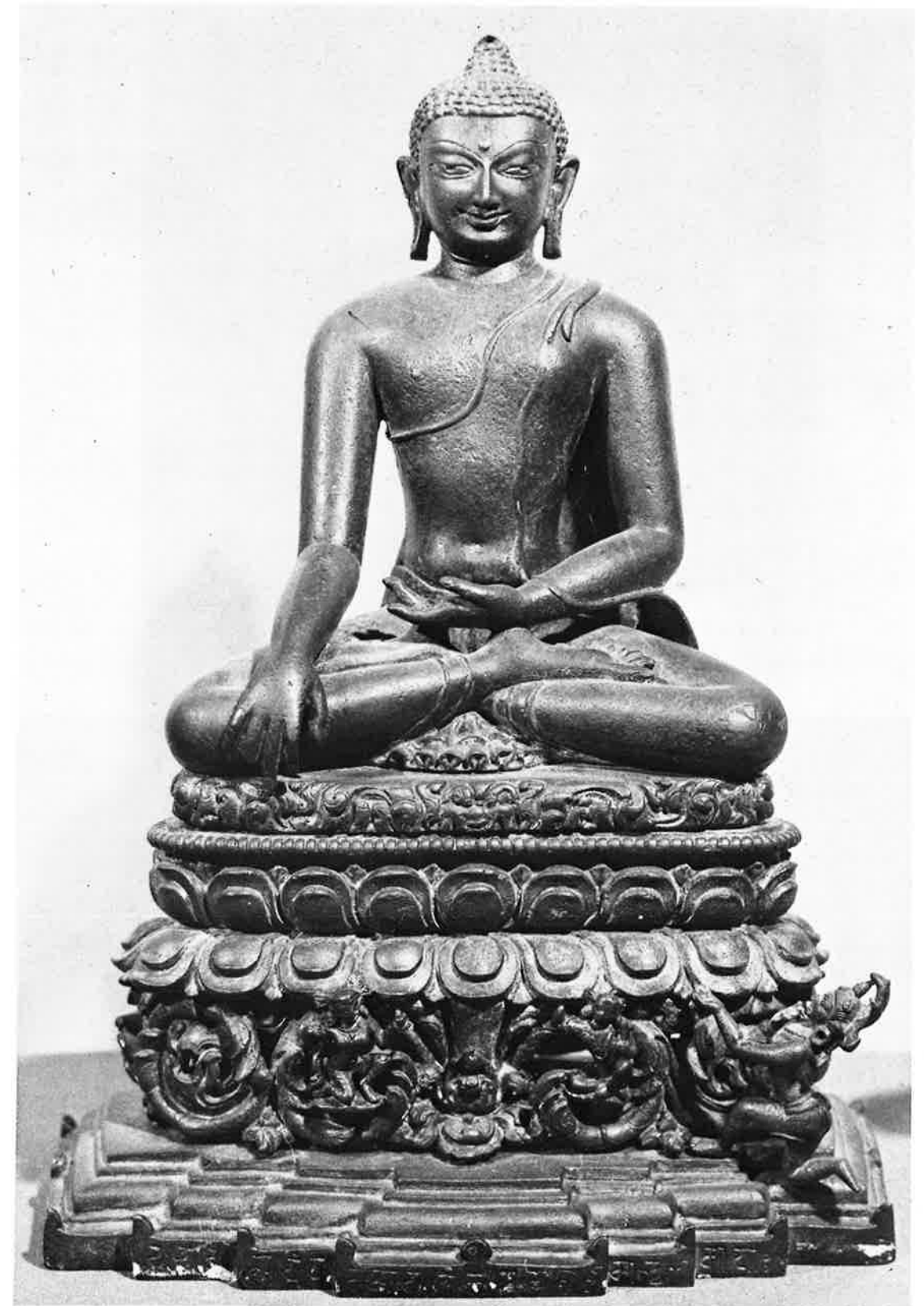


189. Maitreya, Fatehpur, Gaya Dt., Bi-  
har. Ca. 12th century.





190. Maitreya, Fatehpur, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 12th century.



191. Buddha, Fatehpur, Gaya Dt., Bihar. Ca. 12th century.



192. Viṣṇu. Fatehpur, Gaya Dt., Bihar, Ca. 12th century.



193. Buddha. Sūltāṅgañj, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. 7th century.



194. Maitreya. Antichak, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. 12th century.



195. Samvara. Pātharghāṭā, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. 11th century.



196. Vajratārā lotus *maṇḍala*. Pātharghāṭā, Bhagalpur Dt., Bihar, Ca. 12th century.





197. Buddha, Mahāsthāngarh, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. 7th century.



198. Avalokiteśvara. Mahāsthāngarh vicinity, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. 9th century.



199. Yamunā, Pāhārpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.



200. Mithuna, Pāhārpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.



201. Vāyu? Pāhārpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.



202. Hevajra. Pāhārpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



203. Hari Hara. Burdwan Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 7th century.



204. Viṣṇu on Garuḍa. Agradigun, West Dinajpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 8th-early-to-mid-9th century.



207. Varāha. Silimpur, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 10th-early 11th century.



208. Ratnasambhava or Bhaiṣajyaguru? Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-11th century.



205. Pārvatī. Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. 10th century.



206. Mahāpratisarā? Bhavanipur, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-10th century.



209. Amitābha or Garbhadhātu Vairocana? Mahākali, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-11th century.



210. Pārṇasabari. Tangibari, Naynanda, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. 11th century.





211. Sūrya. Rāmpāl vicinity, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



212. Aghora. Ābdullāpur, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



213. Mārīci. Panditsar, Faridpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



214. Durgā Mahiṣāsūramardīnī. Backerganj Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



215. Heruka. Subhapur, Comilla Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



216. Viṣṇu, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



217. Sūrya, Probably from Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



218. Sūrya, Daharpara, Faridpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



219. Viṣṇu, Arial, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



220. Kalyāṇasundaramūrti (Marriage of Śiva), Rāmpāl, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.





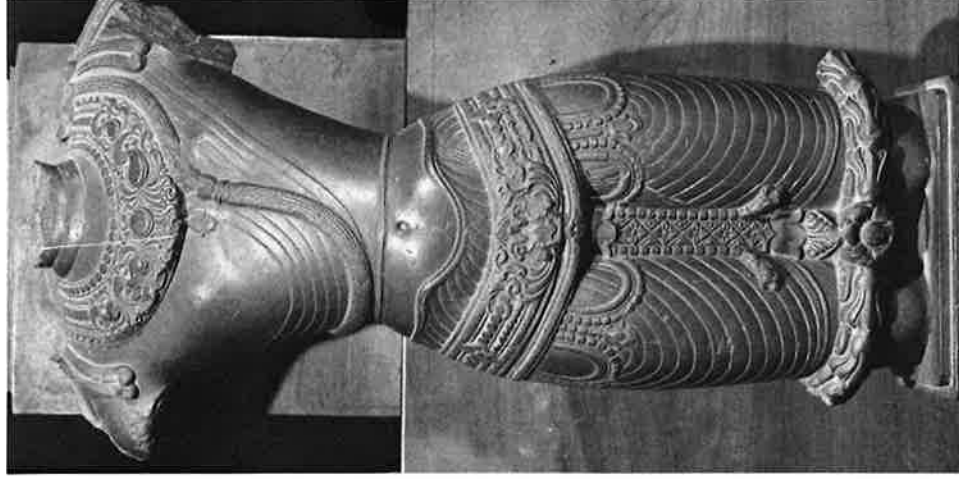
221. Avalokiteśvara, Badarhati, Hooghly Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



222. Parinirvāṇa, Khalisady, 24 Parganas Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



223. Akṣobhya, Bareilly, Nadia Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-11th century.



224. Male figure (Viṣṇu?), Jatardeul, 24 Parganas Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



225. Viṣṇu, Batajore, Barisal Dt., Bengal. Ca. first half 11th century.



226. Sadāśiva. Krishnanagar, Nadia Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



227. Ardhanārīśvara. Purapara, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.





228. Apītakucā? Kāgajipādā, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



229. Viṣṇu. Mahākali, Munshigañj, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



230. Durgā Mahiṣāsūramardīnī. Purulia [Manbhum] Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-12th century.



231. Viṣṇu, Bhandarhati, Hooghly Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th or early 12th century.



232. Buddha's Descent from Trāyastriṃśa. Kirtail, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-11th century.



233. Śyāma Tārā. Nimdighi, Niyamatpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. 11th-12th century.



234. Saḍakṣarī Avalokiteśvara. Niyamatpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-to-late 11th or 12th century.





235. Sadaśiva, Jaminkari Tapar, Dinajpur Dt., Bengal, Ca. mid-to-late 11th or 12th century.



236. Brahmā, Jianagar, Bogra Dt., Bengal, Ca. mid-to-late 11th or 12th century.



237. Avalokiteśvara. Tapandighi, West Dinajpur Dt., Bengal, Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



238. Buddha. Dinajpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



239. Śiva. Gaṇeśpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



240. Kārttikeya. Mahātore, Dinajpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



241. Sūrya. Chopra, Niyamatpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.





242. Sūrya. Baria, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



243. Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara. Chowrapara, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



244. Sūrya. Gaur, Maldah Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



245. Garuḍa. Chowrakasba, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal, Ca. late 11th-early 12th century.



246. Back of Fig. 245.



248. Gaurī with Sadyojāta Śiva? Chowrakasba, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal, Ca. 12th century.



247. Viṣṇu. Balurghāt, West Dinajpur Dt., Bengal, Ca. 12th century.



249. Gaṅgā. Padumshar Tank, Deopara, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal, Ca. 12th century.





250. Gaṅgā. Bhadrāsīla, West Dinajpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



251. Kṛṣṇa, the butter thief. Briddhigrām, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



254. Sitāpatrā. Comilla Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 9th century.



255. Avalokiteśvara. Sylhet, Sylhet Dt., Bengal. Ca. 9th century.



252. Bodhisattva. Maināmatī, Comilla Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.



253. Mañjuśrī Kumāra. Maināmatī, Comilla Dt., Bengal. Ca. early-to-mid-9th century.



256. Akṣobhya, Vairocana and Amitābha. Jhewāri, Chittagong Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-9th century.



257. Buddha. Jhewāri, Chittagong Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-9th century.



258. Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Jhewāri, Chittagong Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-9th century.



261. Buddha. Jhewāri, Chittagong Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-to-late 9th century.



262. Buddha. Jhewāri, Chittagong Dt., Bengal. Ca. 10th century.



259. Buddha. Jhewāri, Chittagong Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-9th century.



260. Vasudhārā. Jhewāri, Chittagong Dt., Bengal. Ca. mid-9th century.



263. Buddha. Pāhārpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. 9th century.



264. Umā-Maheśvara. Pāhārpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. 10th century.



265. Bodhisattva. Mahāsthāngarāḥ, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. late 7th-early 8th century.



266. Male figure. Mahāsthāngarāḥ, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. 9th century.



269. Viṣṇu. Kumārpur, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 8th century.



270. Bodhisattva. Mangalbari, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



267. Buddhist figure. Mahāsthāngarāḥ, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. 9th century.



268. Viṣṇu. Mahāsthāngarāḥ, Bogra Dt., Bengal. Ca. 9th century.



271. Tārā. Pandua, Maldah Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.





272. Manasā, North Bengal. Ca. late 11th century.



273. Kalyāṇasundaramūrti (Marriage of Śiva). Mandoil, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal, Ca. third quarter 11th century.



274. Tārā. Mandoil, Rajshahi Dt., Bengal. Ca. third quarter 11th century.





275. Viṣṇu, Sahibgañj, Rangpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



276. Viṣṇu, Sahibgañj, Rangpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



277. Viṣṇu, Sahibgañj, Rangpur Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



278. Vāgīśvarī, Sonarang, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. 11th-12th century.



279. Buddha, Dhamrai, Dacca Dt., Bengal, Ca. 11th-12th century.



280. Viṣṇu. Sonarang, Vikramapura, Dacca Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.



281. Viṣṇu. Sagardighi, Murshidabad Dt., Bengal. Ca. early 11th century.



282. Viṣṇu. Sagardighi, Murshidabad Dt., Bengal. Ca. 12th century.